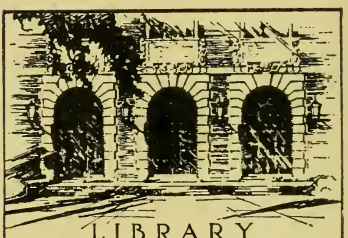
Eliza Giffard



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THE

MISER MARRIED.

M. Pryer, Printer, Bridge-Street, Blackfriars, London.

Eliza Gifford Marquis Hastings

THE

MISER MARRIED.

A Novel,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY

CATHERINE HUTTON.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

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THE

MISER MARRIED.

LETTER XLIII.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Aberystwith, Sept. 26, 1812.

We found the road to this place mountainous, and, in some places, tremendous; but, instead of giving you a minute description of these gigantic productions of nature, and the lovely vales which separate them, I am tempted to relate a circum-

stance that happened at an inn, where we stopped to breakfast; though I am no otherwise interested in it, than as an eye and ear witness.

We were shewn into a room up stairs, which was exactly in the state it had been left in the night before; the tables and chairs were covered with dust, and a lace frill lay on the sopha. The waiter, who was chambermaid also, began to dust the furniture, and to apologize for its want of order, by saying she had been up all night with a lady who was ill. Humanity led us to enquire into the situation of the lady; and, at last, the girl put on a face of secresy and importance, and said, the lady's husband had taken too much wine the night before, and had pushed her against a chest of drawers, by which she had hurt her side.

We pitied the poor lady; were glad to hear she was better; and Eleanor and I took our seats, while breakfast was preparing, at a window that looked into the street of a little country town.

We saw a tall, athletic well-looking man, turned of thirty, and dressed in black, sauntering about, and turning his eyes on every side, as if he was expecting some person to join him. At length he entered the inn.

We soon after saw another man making towards the inn, dressed also in black, and sufficiently handsome; but younger than the first, and not so tall. His occupation was obvious. A small parcel, which he carried in his hand, denoted him to be a traveller; not in the original and general meaning of the term, which includes all who travel by land and by water; but in

its modern and limited acceptation—a man who travels for orders in trade. This gentleman was a coxcomb of such obtrusive magnitude, that no one could avoid seeing him; or could look at any other object, while he remained in view. He took off his hat, to shew his curled, flaxen hair; he arranged his curls, to shew his white hand: he walked on tiptoe, and swung his patterns over his shoulder, to shew his agility and dexterity. He, too, entered the inn.

In a moment we were alarmed by a violent scuffle below, and a cry of murder. Other voices soon joined the uproar; and a bason of water was called for; by which we supposed there was blood. We listened at the top of the stairs, and heard a culprit endeavouring to excuse himself, by saying he had taken too much wine; and an

enraged voice answer, " A man's a " man, drunk or sober! You're a " villain. I will expose you in every " town, and company I go into; and, " wherever I meet you, I will serve " you as I have done here!"

When the tumult had a little subsided, we rang the bell. The mistress of the house came up stairs; and, with tremulous voices, we enquired what was the occasion of the mischief, and what the mischief done. " Ladies," replied she, in a voice still more agitated than ours, " I will tell you all."

" The gentlemen," continued our hostess, " are both travellers, and from " London. One of them"——Here we interrupted her, by saying we believed we had seen them both. Our description of them proved we were not mistaken, and she proceeded.

" Well, then, the tall gentleman is

" married; his wife is a very pretty
" woman; they have been married ten
" years. We know him very well.
" He comes here every year, and he
" is so fond of her, that he travels in a
" gig and always takes her with him.
" Of course, they have a private room,
" and do not eat with other travellers.
" They have got acquainted with the
" other gentleman, on this journey, by
" travelling the same road, and stop-
" ping at the same inns; and they
" have allowed him to eat and sit with
" them, instead of sitting in the public
" room; and it has frequently happen-
" ed that he and the wife have been
" left together, while the husband has
" been out upon business. They were
" in this room, last night, by them-
" selves; and, when the husband came
" home, he sat drinking, in the travel-
" lers' room, below, with some of his

" customers, and the other gentleman
" joined them."

" The lady sat here," continued the mistress of the inn, " till she was
" tired, and then went to bed, in the
" white room, next to this, on the left
" hand. After some time, the single
" gentleman left the company; and
" the chambermaid took his candle,
" and shewed him into the room on
" the right hand of this; and, soon
" after, the lady's husband, as she
" supposed, entered her room. She
" was dropping asleep; but it rouzed
" her. ' Rowley,' said she, for that
" is her husband's name, ' you use me
" very ill. Last night you got tipsey,
" and kept me up; and to-night, that
" I would not wait for you, you dis-
" turb my rest. Come to bed; but
" you shall not serve me so again.'
" ' Hush, hush!' he cried softly; and

" was stepping into bed; when the
" lady turned her head, and per-
" ceived it was not her husband. She
" instantly jumped out of bed; seized
" the other traveller, for it was he, by
" the collar of his shirt, and cried,
" 'Villain! if you do not leave my
" room this moment, I will raise the
" house!' The villain did not heed
" the warning; and she kept strug-
" gling with him, till she found the
" bell, which she rang with great vio-
" lence. He then left the room; and,
" when the chambermaid entered it,
" in answer to the bell, the lady was
" alone. She related these circum-
" stances to the chambermaid, in great
" agitation, and again went to bed.
" The girl was so imprudent as to re-
" peat the story to the husband, who,
" inflamed with rage and wine, rushed
" up stairs, and shut himself up in the

" room with his wife. Presently we
" heard a great noise, and piercing
" screams from the lady. I ran up
" stairs, and bolted into the room,
" and found her on her knees, with
" her body bended back; her hus-
" band with one hand at her throat,
" and, with the other supporting the
" back of her head. She was almost
" suffocated. Intoxicated as the gen-
" tleman was, both with wine and
" passion, he had sense enough left to
" know that his wife had, of her own
" accord, driven out the intruder, by
" ringing the bell; but he insisted
" upon it that she must have given
" him some improper encouragement,
" before he could have attacked her
" in so daring a manner. He vowed
" he would never more enter her bed,
" and ordered one to be made up for
" himself, in another room."

Such was the melancholy story related by the mistress of the inn; which I have given you, as nearly as possible, in her own words. It appeared, from the subsequent account of the chambermaid, that the unfortunate wife, outraged by a villain, and half murdered by a frantic husband, had passed the greatest part of the night in fits.

Though we had felt great horror at hearing the punishment inflicted by the husband on the disturber of his own and his wife's repose, we rejoiced at it, now we knew the provocation; especially as it amounted to no more than two black eyes and a bloody nose, and, consequently affected the beauty, and not the life, of the offender; and as we were, in some measure, parties in the fray, by being known to be within hearing, we ventured to hint, in the hope it mightbe repeated, that,

after the vengeance the husband had taken, it would be kind in him to remit that part of the sentence, which promised a repetition of it every time he should meet the delinquent.

The poor wife remained in bed, during the whole of the engagement; and, as her chamber was immediately over the scene of action, must have heard the whole of it; but we were told, before we left the inn, that her husband was not only reconciled to her, but extremely penitent for his brutal behaviour; ascribing it to the wine he he had drank; though he would not admit that plea in favour of his fellow traveller.

The flaxen-haired hero, who valiantly attacked a defenceless woman, in her bedchamber, and cried out, "Murder," on the just chastisement of her husband, was obliged to pass through

our room to get to his own. He crossed the end of it, with a bason under his nose, and a surgeon at his heels. Three days after our arrival at Aberystwith, he made his appearance here, with a green silk shade over his eyes; and struts, and swings his arms, as if he trusted to his person to make conquests, without the aid of his face. But, our servants having repeated the story, the mistress of the inn will not allow him a place at the public table. He is shunned by every living creature, except his dog; who, not being a competent judge of his master's actions, is content to associate with him, and ride in his gig; and he is pointed out, as he goes along the street, under the appellation of *The Knight of the Green Shade.*

There is no drive on the shore at Aberystwith; or in the country round,

without climbing a steep hill. We walk on the shore; but it is neither a commodious or extensive promenade, being composed of loose pebbles, and bounded, at the distance of about half a mile, by a most magnificent promontory of dark rock.

Ever yours,

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

LETTER XLIV.

TO MUSTER WYLLYAM MANDAL.

Aburisty, Suptimber 27.

HONERIT CUR,

WITH al luv an dooty an blessin this be to lett yo to no as us be got safe and sownd to this plase, uthout ony miss fortin or brockin bons, an that I has sin the gret salt sey. Bot Gods marsy, what a thing it is! I oost to think as how it mut be like unto hour big fishpon, only moor bigger an yujus; and I thot as a boddi mut luck down inter it lik as a draw well; bot no boddi conna hav no high dear on it, till thy do see it. Wen I fust sid it at a distons, an all the botes upon it, nevr trust me, uf I did nat think thy war so monny carts on

a turbury. Ustid o being wattur culler, as watter shold be, it luckt grin an purpil like; an ustid o being in a hollar as watter oost to be, Ile be burnd uf it did not ryse up lik a hil. An now I be clos too it, and do see that it be watur, it lucks as uf it ris the highur the forder it went; and I conna find owt, for the blud on me, wot it be as kips it uthin bownds.

We be the grandest gentlefoks at abberisty, and I do not se nevr a carrig so fine as hourn, wich, as it be spike and spoon, an bran new frum Lunnon citty, binna very wunderable. An I assur yo I be got verry smort, now I be vallit and futman; an I tise mi hyre, an wares wite stockins, an coks mi hat uth the best on um.

Mastr be verry gud, an verry quite;

an hee do evvery thin as my lady do bid him. My sole, wot a chang has hur made! I didua think as it cud be in mortle ooman. Hur do curry him sofly, an smuth him down, and do helter him uth hur appern string.

Ther be a plas hear as thy do call the port; bot for wy I conna tell; for it be no moor liker our red port, nor it be like unto a bole o punge. Howsevr it be a plas o wattr war the ships do randivoos, and lode an onlode; an thy be so nashon big, that won on um wul carri moor nor ony too brod willd wagins: an thy do stort for forrin parts, sich as the oil o man, an quit as for as milk fat haven.

An I be such a tite feller that the wenchis be arter me, mornin, nun, an nite, an I mi pik a chus; but I dos not no yit wother I shal purfar ony

on um to Jinny housmade; but hur mun mynde hur pp and qq, I con tel hur that.

As for the welsmen, I conna sy as I lik um much, becase wy, thy be no bettr nor hotting toads, an wild men o the hoods. To be sur, in the town thy be a littel liker chrishtins, and ool ge a bodi a sivvil anser; bot in the countre thy be throing thar dim sarsnets in yore tith for evr lastin, an the doos an other wurd con yo gett from um.

I be so jimmy yo wunna no me wen I gets wom; an I be affeard as my hosses wunna no me; an if the pure dum things do na spak to me; so as I has rubid um, an fed um, an waturd um, an fettlud um, an evry thing; I shall be dedly vecks-it, thats sartin. I has larnt a thing

or too at aburisty, that mappen, I ma remembr wile I do live. I be got acquintid wth curnal Sundylands vallet, as be hear; an him an me, an hour cochmun an thar grum, do ply at wisk, for sickspuns a cornur. I was mortle lothe at fust, an wantid to ply for luv; but thy loffed me out on it; an now I do see that munni be best; for last nite I wun hoaf a crown.

As for al that I con larn at chorch, I may pot it e my i, an see nevr the wus for it. It be al jibber, jabber, lik the chaterin o the magpys, and I conna, for my sole, under stumble a wurd on it: and all I do wundr at is, how them ther ethons can mak sens on it.

Dere Muster Mendal, yo do see as how I be eprooved i mi riting, an

moor nor that e mi spellin, thanckes be to yoo for it. So no moor at prison frum yores til deth.

RALPH RUSSETTING.

LETTER XLV.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Aberystwith, Oct. 3, 1812.

MY DEAR HARRIET,

I LIKE the air of this place prodigiously; and do not know whether I shall ever breathe that of Winterdale again these ten years to come; that being about the time to which I may limit my claim to the adoration of mankind. We are quite the fashion in Wales. No such dressing; no such dancing; no such equipage! and, as Eleanor seems retiring into the shade with her beloved Henry,—I shine out with redoubled splendor. I see, my dear, I only wanted a proper atmosphere to do my wonted execution. The frozen clods of Winterdale, and its vicinity,

where out of my sphere of attraction; here the masses of earth called men, are moulded from a different soil; and many of them have a portion of London dirt in their composition, which has felt my influence before.

The plain matter of fact is, that Aberystwith has afforded me two new lovers; and, to drop my sublime metaphor, I believe the reason of it is, that there are some men of fashion here, and no women who can come in competition with ourselves.

My first captive is a soldier—you know I am an adept at subduing military men. He is turned of forty; tall, well-looking, robust, and a colonel. He had the good fortune to dance with me at an Aberystwith ball—another coincidence of circumstances—military men cannot withstand my dancing. By dint of joining us, afterwards, in the

public walks, he has pushed his good fortune so far, as to become acquainted with Mr. Winterdale; who, like his great grandmother Eve, will "not, unsought, be won;" but who, now, so far resembles that lady that he may be won with seeking. The gallant colonel has even condescended to study Mr. Winterdale. He plays sixpenny whist with him, and assists him in playing off Mr. Sharp; whose arrival at Aberystwith the day after ourselves, I believe, I forgot to announce.

After a fortnight's sighing and looking unutterable things, Colonel Sunderland ventured to tell me of his ardent love; of the inexpressible happiness he should feel, if I would vouchsafe to give him the most distant hope that I might one day be prevailed upon to return the smallest part of it; that I was the arbitress of his fate;

and many other very handsome things, of the same kind, that, I dare say, you, my dear Harriet, or any other pretty young woman, may well imagine; from having heard them half a dozen times, at least.

I assumed a very grave look, which, you know, is not the natural cast of my countenance, and told him that my whole fortune was in chancery, and it was doubtful whether I should ever be worth a shilling. He was shocked and speechless. At length he recovered himself sufficiently to stammer out hopes that I should gain my cause; and an acknowledgement that he was not in a situation to marry without money. On reflection, however, the undaunted warrior seems determined not to give up the pursuit—it will be time enough to do that, you know,

when the cause is decided against me.

In the beginning of our acquaintance with Colonel Sunderland, as he was sauntering with us by the shapeless ruins of an old castle, near this place, we were met by a handsome, gentlemanly man, about five and twenty, who accosted the colonel with the familiarity of an old acquaintance. The colonel introduced him to us as Sir Edward Halifax; he joined us; and did not make his bow till we arrived at our own door. He, too, is become our visitor; and, I assure you, has his looks, as well as the colonel; and it is from them I guess his meaning; for, as yet, he has not declared it by words.

Now, my dear Harriet, tell me,—ought I to marry a petty subaltern, when I can have a colonel, that is, if

I gain my cause? Shall I carry a knapsack, when I may march from town to town, in my own carriage, drawn by a pair of post horses? Assuredly no: I cannot be so degraded. Of course then, the colonel must—do not be frightened; for I am going to add—not, be the man; and for a very simple reason, which is that honour, justice, and affection are engaged on the side of another.

The same reason, I fear, will decide against the baronet. I never can accept the honour of becoming Lady Halifax, if it should be offered me; because I have determined to be Lady Montgomery, after the decease of the old nabob, if his son should have given me the opportunity.

But, my dear Harriet, do you conceive it necessary to shun one man, because he has made an offer of him-

self to my fortune; or another, because I have reason to think he likes my person? Am I to place myself in a corner of the room, with my face to the wall, and my back to the company; and say to the gentlemen, "I dare not look "at you, and I forbid your looking at "me, for I am not to be had?" I think not. You know that I stand engaged to do what is right, as far as my judgment will direct me: I have consulted judgment on this occasion, and the award seems to be—Converse with both your admirers with your accustomed ease and vivacity. Let your words and looks be the transcript of your heart; and, as that feels no partiality for either, your behaviour cannot mislead them. Judgment, I thank you: for I own I should think you a hard master, if you forbade me the society of my fellow creatures, because

they happened to like me, and be of a different sex. I think, however, that Judgment, or his sister, Prudence, would enjoin me to avoid all opportunities of being alone with either of the gentlemen; and I shall take care to obey the mandate.

Henry's attachment to my cousin is a decided thing; though he has not yet made any declaration. She, herself, no longer doubts it. His manner is irresistible. He does not appear to watch her, or lay her under the smallest restraint. Her conversation is free for every body. But the moment any service or assistance can be rendered, before she is even conscious of any want, he is with her. Nothing escapes him; and the sweet smile of gratitude she frequently rewards him with, overpays every exertion.

I have thought, my dear friend, if

there be happiness below, it is in the silent consciousness of mutual love; such love as this; the lovers such, and so situated. He, handsome, manly, noble, generous, and a little pensive. She, beautiful, modest, delicate, and tender. The whole soul of each devoted to the other; and the love, though supposed to be concealed, and, certainly not revealed by words; yet peeping and peering through every look and action: every such look and action treasured up in the other's heart.

The future presents no alloy to the present happiness of Eleanor and Henry; for, if Mr. Winterdale should oppose it, he is prepared to assert his independence, and she is her own mistress. But, so evanescent is this state of enjoyment, that every step towards its completion must diminish

it. Love talked of is not so delicious, as love sought for, and silently discovered; and then the low concerns of the world mix with it; and jointures, houses, furniture, and wearing apparel, come in for their share.

Henry no longer bestows an uneasy thought on Mr. Sharp; but sees him buz about Eleanor with as little emotion as if it were a gnat; which insect he resembles in all points, except the bite. Nor is Mr. Sharp more discomposed on account of Henry. His optics do not discern Henry's attachment, and he still considers Eleanor as his property; the time, only, when he may be permitted to claim her uncertain.

In contemplating my cousin's happiness, I send a sigh after Montgomery; far distant, and under the domination of a haughty father, too justly

prejudiced against me. Envy, however, has no share in the sighs of

Yours,

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

LETTER XLVI.

TO MR. WILLIAM MENDALL.

Aberystwith, Oct. 5, 1812.

DEAR MENDALL,

I HOPE you have not forgotten that Saturday was the rent day of the Winterdale tenants; and that you have not failed to make every rascal of them pay up to last Lady Day. I think one half year's rent in their hands is a pretty indulgence. I am sure it is a great loss to me. But a farmer is never satisfied; not even with his Maker. If it rains, he wants sunshine; and if the sun shines, he wants rain. It is just the same to his landlord. If he makes him pay his rent when due, he is a hard-hearted oppressor: if he lets him keep it half a

year, pay day must come at last; and he is hard-hearted still. It is a cursed unlucky time to be from home, myself; not that I entertain a doubt of your integrity, as you know; but for fear the whining of some of the poorer scoundrels should make an impression on you. I have a wife, myself, and a confounded expensive one; and I want money as much as they.

You will place the money in the strong box I left with you, and lock it up in the great chest in your room, till my return. As to the iron chest, in which I keep the gold, I have not only the keys with me; but the key of the closet in which it stands, and the key of the chamber in which is the closet; but you will do well to try the chamber door, night and morning. I believe the closet could never be discovered, if the room were bro-

ken into, as the door is so exactly fitted in the wainscoat; but one cannot be too secure. I have, so far, contrived not to touch my hoard, notwithstanding Madam's extravagance; and hope I shall still do without it.

Ah! Mendall! Let no man ever make his calculations, and say, I marry for this, or that advantage. Let him think of me, and take what may befal him. I have been disappointed in every good I proposed to myself by marriage, except the person of the woman. I thought her handsome, and, I will do her justice; she is not crooked, and she does not paint. But I thought her frugal, and find her extravagant: I thought her fond of retirement, and she cannot live out of company: I thought her rich, and she is over head and ears in debt: I thought her obedient, and she is my

master. In what regards her daughter, too, I believe I shall experience the same fate. I meant her for my son ; and Liberal, to whom I shewed the documents, before I came hither, more honest than that sycophant Foreclose, and more learned than myself, tells me she will lose her cause. I have some satisfaction, however, in reflecting that it has been properly conducted: and nothing has been omitted during my superintendance.

But, Mendall, as you have seen me disappointed in all my expectations, it is but fair to tell you that I experience some comforts I did not foresee. On the whole, I lead a happier life than when you and I were alone. I have more enjoyments assembled about me ; though, to be sure I pay high enough for them. Give her Ladyship her way, and she is always good humoured, and

solicitous to please me: Henry looks cheerful and happy: the girls are delighted to wait upon me, or oblige me: Colonel Sunderland, who visits us every day, is a clever fellow, and a good player at whist, though he does not like to play for more than sixpences; and Sharp, though the weakest puppy breathing, is a comical dog, and an excellent laughing stock. So, you see, I have not laid out my money for nothing.

As to Ralph, I hardly know what to make of him. When we first came here, I thought the sea air had turned his brain. He entertained me, while I was dressing, with so many remarks on a mass of waters he had never seen before, and on a people who did not speak his own language; that I thought he might publish his travels, and hinted that he was qualified to write a tour in.

Wales. Then he took to decorating his person after the model of the gayest servants here; and became an unheard of mixture of Winterdale *ploughism* and London *dash*. I concluded him spoiled for ever, and thought of looking out for some honest country fellow in his place; when two nights ago, he came home with a black eye, and has been the picture of misery and mortification, ever since. The cause he will not tell, either to me, or his fellow servants; but I hope it is some penance that will restore him to his senses, and prevent me from discharging a man who has served me so long, and so well, in his way.

Send me, on the receipt of this, a particular account of the rent day.

JOHN WINTERDALE.

LETTER XLVII.

TO MUSTER WYLLYM MENDALE.

Abberisty, hock to beer, 1812.

HONERID CUR,

THIS do com uth mi umbel luv and dooty, hopping to find yo as it do leve me; only not in sorow and trubel, as I be at this prison. dere muster mendull, I has bin a very grat fewl; but nobodi do no it; bot I ull tell yu al. I thot miself a fine fellor, an I soshiated uth kernel sundylands grum and vallet, an plyd at wisk, an wun hauf a crown; an the necks tim I wun five shillin, and thy sed as I was a dip un. An now I mun let yo to no as I had a huge mind of a sollid silvur wach, afore I laft wom, an I thot to myself, thincks I

aberisty be a fine plase, an thar be plenti o grand wach makkers theer, an so I wull by me a wach wan I gets to abburisty, an pik an chews won as ull shoot me: but wen I comd here, the juice of arron was to be fun. But I forgets to insense you that, afour I sot out, I tuk five pond nots, an I sowed um up in the lynin o mi wascott, for feer o robburs and high wimmin; an I pot five shillin e mi poccit, to spend lik, uf ockasion mut be, uth a friend or tew, by chanch. An so, wan id such mortle gud luk at wisk, thincks I to miself, I shal win enof to bye me a wach uth, and I ull by it some tim wan I gos to mark it; an I ull lok mi five nots up e mi bocks, wi mi tuthers. An so I want on, an want on, an I sun lost all as id wun, and thre an sickspunce as I had laft o mi spendin

munny; and than I laft of an sed as id no moor. Bot than thy loffed at me, an geered me, an sed, yo a gentelmans sarvunt! yo be nuthin but som pur di laberer, uth a wife an five begerley brats, an yer mastr a tacken yo frum the plow tyle, for the jurny. Icod! thy put up mi blud soo, at last, that I up wth mi hands, an ript oppen mi wascot, and shod um mi five banck o inglond nots. Then thy begun to draw in thar horns, an curri fever we me, an strowket me down, an sed as how thy wan onli a jok; an uf I ood try mi luk aggen, I mut mack mi five nots ten. Tom fewl beleeft um; an sot down agen; an by som tims whinin a letel, an som tims lowsin a gray jel, I got to lowse tew o mi pond nots. Desprat mad I wor, to be suer! An won o the himps o darcknis sed, he cold

not thinck however it could bee; for I was a bettr plyer nor thy, he node; for I wos won o the noing uns. An the tother said he node that, an uf hee was as me heed hav his tew nots bak aggen; for heed ply dubbel or quits: an Tom fewl was fewl aggen; an soo I lost fore o mi nots.

I thot, for sartin, I should a gon crackky! an I storted up, an I sas, sas I, I ull hay some moor ply for mi mony, howsevr; yo shanna ge me sich howdayshus yousich for this: an I gid muster grum a rite gud dab o the chops. I got a black hi, to be suer; bot I did na mind that; for I gen him sich a drubbin as I thinks he ull remembr the lungist dy he have to liv. An than I calld out to muster vallitt, as he was a snekin out o the rum, hollo! sas I, sty a bit! I has gotten annother gam for yo! but the

rog hood no sty to ply it; soo I just gen him a gud kik behynd, has he went out o the doer; an wan I mits um uth the strit, I blos me nose at um.

Yo ma thinck as how I was nayshon molluncolly arter sich a los, an sich fewlisnis, bot I hood na tel noboddy; an to mack bad wurs, thar comd a litel black luckin feller to aburisty, an he hoppend a shop about as big squar as won o mi corn bins, and hung it all rownd uth waches, an rings, an dymonts, an silvar spoons, an silvar thimbels, and all thy kynd o rich things. An ther I sid a new, brite, silver wach, as big as the topp o hour cuks drugger bocks. I luckt at it with a longin hi, an I thot to miself, uf I haddna bin a fule, now that wach mut ha bin mine. At last I thot I hood gust goo in, and hacks the

prise; ther cold not be no harm e that. Wy, sas the mon, the prise be five pond, and he be dog chep at that; but as yo sim to have a grate mind on it yo shall have it for fore. Lord, lord! how did I vecks to thinck that evr I shold be sich a hass, as to meddel uth the cards, an miss sich a borgin. So I een tould the mon the wool story, an lett him to no as I had no moor nor won pund not laft. Well, sas hee, then to hoblege yo, the wach shall be raffleed for. Do yo sett yor nam down heer, for won pund, an as sun as I gett thre moor, yo shal throw for the wach; and then uf yo gets it for yer won pond note, ye wool be as well of as uf yod never playd at wisk: bot be suer as yo dos not part uth the not to nobbody elce. I did not verry wel no wot throwing wos; but he shoed me a litel bocks,

an a pare o dys, an rackled um, an throd um out, an I was suer I cold do that: so I rot Ralph Russetting, as he bid me; and he tould me too get as monny nams as evr I cud, that we mut throw the sunner; an our cochman had not nevr a wach, and he sot his nam down; an us purswadid Cur Yethed Aleifacks man to sett his nam down, an the mon o the shop he got annother; and us all pyde our pond nots, an than us throd. I throd fust, and the mon sad, that be a good un; nuboddy unna bete that, Inos; I allis thot as yod a whinin fase: and then Sur Yethards mon, he throd, an he cold na come up to me, nor near; an than the strang man throd, an he was wursar yit. Now, thincks, I to miself, the wach is mine; for he must be ither mine or the cochmons, an I had the whinin fase; an so the cochman

throwd, an has the devvle hood have it, hee bet me. Howsevr the olde un was but his frend by hauvs, for the wach stans stok still, an ool na 'stur, for all the triks that evr he can ply. Coachy tuk him bak to the litel black fellor, an he told him to set him to rites; bot he sad the wach was a thurrow good un, an it wos non of his bisnis to mend him. It be som comfoot to have a frind in hood farcity; an I tels cochman uf I was as him, I hood take mi coche wip to mi wach, an sarv him as I sarvd mi hossis, an mak him goo. Bot I shold deerly lik to pule that littel black fellar out in his shop, an lether him, as I did the grum; onley I darsunt.

Deer muster Mandale, yo do see as how my notes be all fled awy, an I has not a sickspens in my poccit. Thy do sy that ecksparunse maks fewls wise;

an uf it be trew, I be lik to be wise miself; for I can sy by ecksparuns, I has been fewl enof. If evr yo do si me prick up mi heres, wan I gets wom, an thinck miself a fine fellor, do yo tel me o aberisty. Ther be won thing as I be glad on yit; an that be as I did not pruv fause to Jeny; for uf id a gin miself up to the wenchis, thy mut a done me, as wel as the men; an I cold not ha lickt um, as I did mastr grum. So no more at prisent from yore kind an sorrowful wel wishar, and umbel sarvant,

RALPH RUSSETTING.

LETTER XLVIII.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Aberystwith, Oct. 10, 1812.

MY DEAR HARRIET,

THE contents of this letter will not be of the most agreeable complexion. In the first place, we have received intelligence from Mr. Mountney that the Montgomery cause will be heard very soon; and he acknowledges he is not so sanguine in his expectations of success, as he was some time ago. This, from my own solicitor, I imagine almost amounts to a decree against me.

Were Montgomery and I independent of our family, not only in circumstances but in mind, little would it matter to which of us the estate be-

longed; but, a father, such as his, between us, how much more desirable for me to bestow a favour than receive one! to furnish the means of repairing my misconduct, than to take it with me, as a burthen upon him!

This chancery suit, my dear Harriet is a touchstone for my lovers. Like the rose of the fairy prince, which, laid on the bosom of his mistress, distinguished the faithful from the false, it brings to light the admirers of my person, and those of my fortune.

Colonel Sunderland received such a sudden order to join his regiment, two days after the communication of Mr. Mountney was made known to him, that he could not take a personal leave of us; but left a note to Mr. Winterdale, with his servant, to be delivered after he was gone. Sir Edward Halifax, on the contrary, has

assumed a courage he was not master of before, and has earnestly solicited my permission to make proposals to my guardians, without waiting the event of the suit. His person, manners, understanding, and fortune, are unexceptionable; and I might, probably have loved him, if I had not known Montgomery. But I can be very serious upon a serious occasion. Without owning my attachment to another, which I did not think necessary, I declined his addresses in a manner that could admit of no doubt.

Sir Edward hoped that time and assiduity might alter my opinion, and produce some change in his favour; and begged to be permitted to continue his visits. I assured him my opinion was already favourable to him; as must be that of every person to whom he was known; and Lady

Winterdale, as well as myself, would always receive him with pleasure: but that with regard to any visits particularly intended to me, I could not admit them, and was certain my opinion could not change on this subject. I was so civil and so peremptory, he said, that I cut off all his hopes; but rather than lose intirely the privilege of seeing and conversing with me, he would accept it on my own terms.

Sir Edward still is with us every day, and joins in all our parties and excursions. My behaviour to him is just what it has ever been, cheerful, and without restraint; his, a little more reserved and pensive; approaching nearer that of Henry Winterdale to Eleanor than I could wish.

Now, my dear Harriet, I have an acquaintance to introduce to you, of such consequence that all others dis-

appear before him. I will hasten to relieve you from the pain of conjecture.

This morning we took an airing along a very lonely, desolate part of the country, though upon what is here called a high road. My mother, Mr. Winterdale, Eleanor and I were in the carriage; Henry Winterdale and Sir Edward Halifax on horseback. We had gone more than six miles out, when the clouds, which had threatened some time, began to pour down; and the thunder and lightening became tremendous. We ordered the coachman to turn back; he informed us there was a carriage broken down, a little further on; humanity prompted us to enquire into the situation of the travellers; and we bade him drive to the spot. We found the carriage totally disabled, and an elderly lady and

gentleman standing by it, exposed to all the fury of the storm. No house, or shelter of any kind was in sight; mountainous sheep-walks appearing on one hand, and a foaming sea on the other.

Lady Winterdale immediately invited the lady and gentleman into her carriage; they accepted her offer with gratitude; and we drove towards Aberystwith. Ah! Harriet, how did the countenance of this gentleman alarm me, from its resemblance to that of Montgomery! and how did my heart forebode the truth—for it was indeed his father! Montgomery had said that his father and mother were setting out on a tour; but though our meeting them was not improbable, as, of all tours, those in Wales are most frequent; yet their dropping from the

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moon could scarcely have been more unexpected.

After thanking Lady Winterdale again, in the most cordial manner, for her well-timed assistance; the gentleman told her, that he was Sir James Montgomery; and that Lady Montgomery and himself were travelling for their health and amusement, when their carriage broke down, as we had seen; and their continued exposure to the storm might have endangered their lives, if we had not so fortunately, and so kindly, come to their relief.

My mother replied, that the small service she might have rendered to any persons in their situation would have been a gratification to her; but, in the present instance, it was doubled, by her once having had the honour to belong to their family. She then added,

with the most perfect ease, that she had been the wife of Sir George Montgomery, and was now the wife of Mr. Winterdale, slightly bowing to her husband; and that that young woman, looking at me, was her daughter.

The revolution this intelligence produced in the features of Sir James is indescribable. The gratitude and benignity which shone in his still fine dark eyes, became overcast in a moment, and all was gloom. What was his reply I know not. During the rest of the ride he spoke little, and all he said was evidently forced. Mr. Winterdale was not wanting in civility; but he never speaks much to strangers. I was dumb, and opened not my mouth. My mother talked with her accustomed ease and vivacity; and Lady Mont-

gomery, affable and agreeable, in her manners, and conscious of the painful restraint of our situation, contributed her share to the conversation. Henry Winterdale and Sir Edward Halifax were severally introduced by my mother to Sir James and Lady Montgomery.

When we arrived at Aberystwith we set the travellers down at the door of the inn, and then returned home, where this unexpected meeting furnished a sufficient topic for the rest of the day.

Every thought of my mind is directed towards Sir James Montgomery. Never did I so much desire to appear amiable in the eyes of his son, as I do in his; and never did I look and feel so stupid. Shall I see him again, my dear Harriet? or will he leave

Aberystwith, without any further notice? Both are equally dreaded by

Your

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

I forgot to say that Mr. Francis Elrington, the only one of the family who expressed no desire to come hither, arrived this morning.

LETTER XLIX.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Aberystwith, Oct. 17, 1812.

MY DEAR HARRIET,

THE morning after I wrote last my mother was endeavouring to convince Mr. Winterdale of the propriety of his going to the inn, to inquire after the health of Sir James and Lady Montgomery, and, doubtless would have succeeded, as she always does; when Sir James was announced. He said his carriage would be repaired that day, and he should leave Aberystwith early the next; but he could nor quit it without renewing his acknowledgments for the favour he had received.

The manner of Sir James was cold and ceremonious; yet there was an

anxiety in his countenance which made me apprehend he had something particular to say; and I was not surprized when he asked my mother, with a forced smile, if she would trust him a few moments alone with Miss Montgomery. My mother replied, with great gaiety, that she would trust his honour; though neither his age or his person; and left the room. Mr. Winterdale had been called out before.

Now, Harriet, what did I feel! Agitation, even to trembling; to the shaking of my whole frame; but none of those heart-felt agonies as when I feared the disclosure of my secret might make me be despised by his son. I remained silent; and Sir James scarcely knew how to begin. After some pause, he entered into the subject at once, by saying, "I suppose you know, Madam, that I am ac-

quainted with what has passed between you and my son?"

"Mr. Montgomery has informed me that you are, Sir."

"I am sorry to distress a young lady; but I think it best for all parties that I should be explicit." He stopped. I was silent; and Sir James continued. "You must be sensible that to borrow money of usurers is the resource of extravagance and misconduct, only; that it is so odious, so ruinous, even in a man, that a woman of common discretion would not unite herself to him, if she knew it. What, then, must it be in a young woman?"

"It is not possible for any person to be more shocked at such a proceeding than I am now, Sir. When I had recourse to the expedient it was to pay just debts, and it did not appear to me in so degrading a light."

" Opinions change as our interest changes. You might still have found a plausible pretext for continuing so disgraceful a practice; if you had not fixed your affections on a young man, whose friends, if he had any, could not fail to disapprove it; and if Jews could have been found to advance money on your present prospects."

I trembled no more. Just, though the accusation were, it roused my courage. I calmly and steadily replied, " I have to thank your claim, Sir, and the love of Mr. Montgomery, that spared me the trial: for I have always feared that, having once been culpable, it was easy to be so again."

" I like your candour. I do not wish to detract from your merit. I even acquit you of all interested views, by believing that you might imagine you had some title to the Montgomery

estate, and were willing, in case it should be awarded to you, to share it with my son; but that idea can exist no longer: you must have been informed that not a doubt of my right remains."

"I have been informed that I have not so much ground for hope as was imagined."

"Pardon me then if I ask what hopes you can possibly entertain of another kind?"

"If I believed the love of Mr. Montgomery were founded on the family estate, I could not hope for one, unless I were to possess the other."

"Ah! too well you know that is not the case! Too well you know the headstrong, disobedient boy, in defiance of parental advice and authority, is prepared to run every risque for your sake! But what those risques are you

will shudder to think, when I tell you that, while I live, he will have nothing but his commission. Were he to marry a young woman who had kept within the bounds of propriety, though she were destitute of fortune, I might consent; as the family estate will place us in affluence: but one that is worse than destitute; that owes large sums of money; debts contracted in a scandalous manner, to satisfy the clamours raised by dissipation and profusion; that is imprudent, to give it no worse a term, both by inheritance and example; it is not possible I should sanction such an alliance! I have been told that Lady Montgomery used the most unjustifiable deceit to draw in Mr. Winterdale; and that she was deeply in debt, as well as yourself. I do not say that children necessarily resemble their parents—" [No, thought I; if

they did, I should never have loved your son—] " but that they generally do, in mind, as well as person, is a fact; to say nothing of the certain effects of example on one side, and imitation on the other."

" Sir," said I, " I hear you with deep humiliation; because your reflections, though very cutting, are just, I have deserved them all—except one; which is the conclusion you draw of my duplicity from that of my mother. Mr. Montgomery must have told you that, in the first moment of the declaration of his love, I declared my folly. Agonizing, though it were, I did not spare myself. I had, before, endeavoured, though without success, to prevail upon my mother to pursue the same line of conduct, with regard to Mr. Winterdale. In all other points, I see my error with as much abhor-

rence as yourself. I have suffered bitter anguish for it; and I am sensible that all I have to trust to, for your good opinion, as well as that of the rest of the world, is the future. This is so uncertain a foundation, t at it does not become me to make professions and promises; but I hope I shall not be thought the less determined because I am afraid to do so."

"By no means," replied Sir James: "I would the rather trust you—if," added he, after a moment's pause, "your caution were not dictated by your present conduct, as well as the past."

"I do not understand you, Sir," said I.

"I am almost ashamed to explain myself. I do not permit servants to repeat their idle stories to me; much less do I ever make enquiries of them; but what passed in the kitchen of the

inn. last night, appeared to my man so extraordinary, that, as it regarded a young lady of my own name, he took the liberty to tell me of it this morning." Sir James stopped.

"Proceed, Sir, if you please. I have not the most distant idea of what you allude to."

"It seems that two men, one the servant of Sir Edward Halifax, the other of Colonel Sunderland, each asserted that Miss Montgomery was going to be married to his master. The latter said every thing was settled between you; his master had set off for his regiment; and was to meet you at Winterdale, on your return to that place, and make you his bride. The other said his master was still here, and with you every hour of the day; and that the marriage between him and yourself was to take place before you left

Aberystwith, The men grew warm; accused each other of lying; and, at length came to blows. The master of the house, alarmed by the disturbance, entered the kitchen and parted them; and, understanding the cause of the quarrel said, ' You are a couple of fools. I suppose the lady has given encouragement to both your masters; for they have both been dangling after her ever since they came here: but it is said she is a great heiress; and, most likely some other dog will run away with the bone.' A simple-looking fellow, a servant of Mr. Winterdale then said, ' he knew that to be true; for there was one 'Squire Montgomery stood the best chance.' "

" Sir," said I, finding Sir James had ended, " this is more than I deserve. My first errors were the effects of thoughtlessness; but I soon found

they were not to be committed with impunity. I found the Almighty Maker of my frame had placed a monitor in my bosom, whose reproaches were intolerable, and who was roused by every person I conversed with. Unable to bear its tortures, I formed the resolution to consult it in every future action of my life, and to be guided by its dictates. My conscience has acquitted me, with regard to the two gentlemen you have mentioned; but I never once reflected that I was responsible to the master of every inn, and to every servant who drank a can of beer in his kitchen."

"Allow me to say, then, that you did not reflect justly. We are responsible for our conduct to every one of our fellow-creatures. There is not one, who knows, or has heard of us, but constitutes himself a judge of our ac-

tions; and though their ideas, taken collectively, are generally carried too far, they are seldom ill-founded."

"I see it; I see it, Sir," said I, "I have committed another error. Satisfied with not deceiving the gentlemen in question, I have deceived the mass of mankind, and led them into an opinion injurious to delicacy, and my affection for Mr. Montgomery. But, Sir, as you have named these gentlemen, will you permit me to relate what has passed between them and me?"

"As I am not interested in it, I will not give you that trouble."

"Have the goodness to allow me to tell you, in as few words as I can. As you have heard one part of the truth, candour requires you, Sir, to hear the other. Unfortunately for me, truth and falsehood are so blended in

the relation you have heard, that perhaps I may not be able to separate them, without leaving some suspicion behind. Both these gentlemen addressed me; and both solicited my hand. My fortune was so evidently the object of the colonel that I had only to tell him it was in litigation, to silence him; and that it was almost hopeless, to make him leave the place without seeing me. The attachment of Sir Edward appears more sincere. The former suspence and present danger of my fortune have made no impression on him; but I have put an end to every hope he might have entertained as a lover; and he is now upon the footing of a friend; not to me only, but to the family. He is deserving of our friendship; and his person, good qualities, and disinterestedness are such that, had I never known Mr. Mont-

gomery, it is possible he might have been something more."

"It was not my intention, when I came," rejoined Sir James, "to have mentioned any thing derived from so dishonourable a source as the tattle of servants. I was led to it unawares; and I am not sorry I was; since what you have now said, respecting Sir Edward Halifax, gives me hopes that the real object of my seeking this interview may not be unacceptable to you. Though my gratitude for the service I received from Lady Winterdale is not lessened by knowing to whom it is due; I will frankly own I would have exposed myself and Lady Montgomery to the whole of the storm, rather than have profited by her kindness; had I known it at the time. Chance having unavoidably thrown me in your way, however, I thought

I would make a proposal, which appears to me too advantageous to be rejected. I understand you correspond with Mr. Montgomery; you therefore know that all my endeavours to make him give up his pretensions to you have been fruitless. I now address myself to you. Though there is an appearance of openness and sincerity in your manner which I admire, past improprieties have made too deep an impression on my mind to be eradicated. That the decree of the Lord Chancellor will be against you has never been doubted by me, and is now clear to every other person. What then remains for you, but beggary and imprisonment—these are harsh words, Miss Montgomery, and painful to utter, but I must not disguise the truth —beggary and imprisonment, if you continue single. If you marry my

son, you share the beggary, and the imprisonment is his!"

My eyes were fixed upon those of Sir James, I suppose, with an expression of horror. I could not speak. He went on.

"The way to escape all this is now open to you; and such a way as you acknowledge you might have chosen, if you had not known my son. Relinquish him. Give me your word you will never see him more; or write to him, except to tell him your unalterable resolution. Marry Sir Edward Halifax; and I will settle with your Jews, and send you their bonds."

I remained speechless and motionless for some time; and Sir James looked at me with an eye not devoid of compassion. At length I recovered my faculties and answered, "Never, Sir! If all the evils and punishments

you could assemble were placed on one hand, and all the pleasures and gratifications you could name on the other; the one could not terrify, or the other bribe me to give up Montgomery. No, I will meet the consequences of my fault; a fault sufficiently repented of, if not atoned for. If your son deserts me, I will submit to my fate: if he does not, I hope I shall never consign him to a prison to keep myself out of it." My voice faltered during the latter part of this sentence; the idea of Montgomery in a prison overcame me; and I burst into tears.

Sir James seemed affected. "I have made the experiment, however," said he; "if I cannot succeed it is not my fault." He then hurried out of the room.

In what unknown, unthought of horrid shape is this trangression of

mine to appear to me in future? I had hitherto considered it only as placing a temporary obstacle between me and Montgomery; a barrier which would be removed when I came of age. The only question appeared to me which should bestow the fortune. I saw not the unrelenting father, who stood between him and the possession of it. Now, it seems, I cannot be the wife of Montgomery, without subjecting him to a prison! Well might such a cruel contingency not enter my mind; for I cannot comprehend how it could ever find a place in the breast of a parent.

Never, Montgomery, will I bring you into such a hazard. Never will I marry you, till the estate is yours—I was going to say, yours, or mine; but the latter is a hope that must be banished for ever. If your love be of the

same durable texture as my own, I will wait for you till my shining dark ringlets are sprinkled with grey; and I will not murmur, or harbour one uneasy thought; except as to the effect their change of colour may produce upon you. If it cannot stand the trial which is prepared for us, Go—leave me to my fate.

I could live upon a little, Harriet; upon a bason of milk for the first and last meal of the day, and a morsel of meat for my dinner: I could live in a cottage; not what modern luxury denominates a cottage; but the habitation of a labouring man: but, I have examined my powers, and I find I could not, by any means, procure these things for myself. Here, then, will I rest. The infinitely good and wise Being which formed me, has given me limited faculties, and these

I will exert to the utmost. More cannot be required of me, and all beyond I will trust to his gracious care to provide.

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

LETTER L.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Aberystwith, Oct. 24, 1812.

MY DEAR HARRIET,

My last letter from Montgomery is full of tenderness, and impatience to call me his; but does not mention the visit of his father; of which he is probably uninformed. He repeats his intreaties that I will elope with him. He conjures me, by every claim he has upon my affections, to consent immediately; and says, this opportunity neglected, his mind forebodes it will not return. Ah! Montgomery, you have heard my cause is hopeless, though your delicacy does not allow you to tell me so; and you wish to shelter me against the coming storm.

Grateful to my heart is your love and generosity; but they shall not expose you to perils, which, though I could call by name in my last letter, my pen now refuses to trace.

I have told Montgomery all that passed between his father and myself; but my resolution not to involve him in my evil destiny, and to be his, when I can without danger to himself, I have not mentioned; for I will make him no promises, any more than Sir James. I always regarded promises as sacred things, and feared to make them, lest circumstances might occur which might render it ineligible to keep them: but I begin to think they should almost be dismissed from our intercourse with each other. If my sense of duty and propriety do not alter, I am bound to adhere to it, without a promise, which is, then, unnecessary: if it do, I ought

to change as my conviction changes, and my promise is worse than unnecessary; for it compels me to do wrong, before I can do right. It is enough that Montgomery will see my love for him has undergone no alteration from this interview with his father.

I have profited so far by Sir James's lesson, that I have never since been seen with Sir Edward Halifax. When he is here, my behaviour is what it was, because I am convinced I cannot mend it; but, in compliment to that world, to which I have been taught I am accountable, I deprive myself of the exercise of walking, when that gentleman is of the party, or when we are likely to meet him. He perceives it, and looks dejected; but does not complain. Indeed he could not complain; for no expectation of his do I disappoint.

Henry and Eleanor are not quite so happy as when I mentioned them last; which is only saying they are human; for humanity must pay some appropriate tax for such felicity as theirs. She is the loadstone that has drawn Frank Elrington hither; and he is a most unwelcome intruder to both. Henry has nothing to fear from him; and I believe he thinks so, when he listens to reason; but love is stronger than reason, and often refuses to be guided by its dictates. Watchfulness and suspicion have introduced themselves into the party. The gentlemen are beset by these; while Eleanor is under the dominion of fear and restraint; the fear of giving pain to one; and caution, lest she should either offend or encourage the other.

Mr. Sharp has discovered a rival in Frank Elrington, though he has never

suspected Henry. His behaviour is truly ludicrous on the occasion. Sometimes he affects to whimper, and calls her to account, as if she were responsible to him for every word and action: at others, he relies upon his fortune, and what he terms his *natteral* acquirements, and believes himself still sure of his prize.

What the mild and yielding temper of Mrs. Elrington could not accomplish, the flight of the son and heir of the foxhunter has brought about. The whole family has followed him to Aberystwith. The father is not without his watchfulness and suspicions too; and they it were, I fancy, that brought him here; as it is said he is governed by the same views in the marriage of his son which directed him in his own —riches. He has a lady in his eye, to whom the son has been introduced,

and to whom he made no objection, till his acquaintance with Eleanor. She has four times her merit; that is, her fortune is four times as large. Mrs. Elrington is a most interesting companion. In the words of the song, she has "Sense and sweetness join'd;" and nobody can help loving her—but her husband.

The Misses, on their arrival, found as much fault with Aberystwith, as Mrs. Thacker, on our first acquaintance, did with Winterdale—Horrid! —Shocking!—Abominable! Not a creature to be seen!—As soon as they had seen Sir Edward Halifax, however, they changed their opinion; and, from that moment, they saw nothing else. But their everlasting competition would prove fatal to their projects, if their eagerness did not. If I had a sister, and considered only the policy

of the thing, I would sometimes lye by, and let her shine alone. I should then, probably, either be taken for my modesty; or she would be taken out of my way. A continual strife for admiration must divide it—if, indeed, both candidates are not equally despised.

I know, at this moment, in the north, five single sisters; and so they are likely to remain, from the adoption of this very plan of the Misses Elrington. Their persons are handsome; their manners not disagreeable; their dress genteel; their fortunes small; and their years, alas! from twenty-eight to forty. Formidable was this number for a single man to attack, and few there were who dared to do it. All at home, and every mouth open at once; if a male visitor directed his discourse to one, another was not satis-

fied till she had turned its channel towards herself. The third succeeded in depriving the second of the gentleman's attention; and the fourth was equally successful over the third; so that no poor man could ever tell where to fix his choice.

Adieu. The Montgomery cause comes on immediately; and we shall hear the decision at home. I am one of the blessed of Pope; for, as I expect nothing, I shall not be disappointed.

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

As I was folding up my last letter, Eleanor entered our dressing-room, and I put it into her hands, to read. Well, Eleanor, said I, when she had finished, what do you think of my resolution never to have Montgomery

till he is rich; and to wait till that time for him, if he will permit me?

Ah! Charlotte, replied she, while a tear stole gently down her cheek, I admire your resolution; but when you talked of a cottage and a bason of milk, you forgot *me*?

LETTER LI.

TO MUSTER WILYAM MENDEALL.

Aburisty Hock to bear, 1812.

Revurunt Sur,

I RITES this to lett you to no that threw Gods blessin I be in good yelth at this prisent, an hesier in mynde than wan I rot afore, blesid by God for it. Us be a leving this plase sun, and I hops as how I be bothe wysur an bettr for mi travveals. All the nus I do no be as us had lik to ha had mishtif, and I ool tel yo the y and the were four. I was behint owr carrige a gooin a hareing ovr this conshumit dissolute cuntry, an it powrd down as uf heven an yarth was coming tigether, an wot shold us mit bot a carige brock down, an not abel to stur a

fut; an it thonderd an litund lik the dy o jugment. An so thar wos a gud lik gentelman an lady a letel in yeres, an ther thy stood, lik stock fishes, ovr the brockin down carrig. An so mi lady calld to me to gett doun, an hacks um to com into owr coach, an thy simd myty thancfull, an myty hobleeged to me, an so thy comd in. But uf I wos to gee yo sevn yere yo nevr cold gess wot old nic had sent us. hoo shold it be but Sur jams mundgumbury an is lady, that be pying the lyars to get um our poore swete mis mundgumbrys estate. Uf I ad bin wurthi to none it, thy shold ha bin wat to the skyn on um, afour as id a hard mi lady. An so us tuck um to Aberisty, an sot um down at the taubut. But muster mendill, being as how yo has not travild in walls, mappen yo does not no wot a tawbut

be, an so I ool insense yo. It be, for all the whirld lik a dog of a hownd, uth brod slowch eres an a curly tyle; only a stid o being wite uth black an brown blonchis, it be all over yaller, lik goold. But as I nevr sid no dogs o that culler in wals, it be lik the pynter put that on for nothin. An I thot sur jams luckt a letel bit sulky wan us sot him down. An at nite, as I wus a sittin at the taubot, a drinkin a pot o lunnon pore tur, uth sur yethad Allifacks man, that skowndril kernals valet bigun on him and sad as how is mastr ood hav mis mundgumberry. Cur Yethuds man sad it wos Cur Yethad as was to hav hur, an at last, thy fit. I sid Sur jams mundgumbrys vallet us lying his heres to the tabel, an I thot I ood set all strate at wuns; an I sad sas I, I nos bettr nor that; for it be squir mundgumbery as be to

hav hur: howsevr I supose he did not bileve me; for neckst mornin sur jams comd to hour hows, an calld pure mis mundgumbory ovr the coles, for being fals hartid to his sun; an he sot hur a crying, an thre toned to send hur to bottomry by for pargery. Thy ma wel strive for hur; for hur be the swetist crater that evr the son shon on: bot sur jams nid not a bin so hoar anbuff houtray goose, for hur do lov the verry grownd is son do walk on. I has sin hur culler com an goo, an com an goo, wan hur ha sin him; an I dos no bi miself wot it be, an wot a nashon uprore I do fil, wan mi coller do com an goo for jinny.

I has had a torn uth the methodys, but rite or rung I be got clere on um. A mon wus parged upon a stul in the town strit, an macking a hujus nise, an a grate crowd o peepel wus all

abowt him, an so I want an mad won amungs um; bot hit wus all won as the porich chorch; for I cold mack nyther topp nor tyle on it. an som thy cryd, an som thy sobid, an som thy groned, an som beeted ther bossoms; an I thot to miself, Laudamity, wot fewls yo be, to mind all this here nise, an nevr a wurd spocken; for I cold not eckstingish so much as a, b, c; an so I lofed at um. An so the parcon ficksit is I I on me as uf he ood a hetten me, an he crid owt, as plane as evr I cold ha spocken miself, An thow, sinfull sinner as thow bist, God do call the to repentens an a nuw life. Crist do bid me call to the to fourseck thy evle wys, an foller him. Gosh! it strook me al on a hepe, and I nevr mad no anser; but I stool awy, an went wam, an I sot me down an considerrd. I nod as God had called me

to repentens; for I sorely repentid plying at wisk, uth them ther himps of the devle, an lowsing fore pund thre an sickspens; an more nor that I nod as I ripentid, raflein for the wach; an I thot for sartin the parson mut ha bin towld on it by God his self, becase wy? noboddy els nod on it, saveing, an ecksepting yu, an the old un. an has to foor seeking sich evle wys, I did not want crist to bid me; for I was fooly ficksid nevr to ply at wisk no moor. How I mut foller crist, I could nut no wys find out, an I thot I hood goo to the parsin an hacks; but I thot I hood jest cry a litel furst, to let him se as I reppentid, and I sot me down utha sarvents hall, an cryd as well as evr I cold; an has luck ood hav it, my mastr comd in wan I wos in the middist on it, an he sid me a crying, an he bid me com into the

drauin rum, an he hackst me wot wus the mattr; an mi lady wus by, an I wus a letel shy o speking; but at last I brok owt afresh, an cryd an towld um, as the parson had fownd me out; and I was a pure sinfull sinner, and I was a gooin to foller crist; an so thy got it all out on me. An mi lady sed as I wus o the rite sort o stoff to mack a methody on: an mastr sed as no mon cold sarv tew mastrs, an uf I follered jesus I shold nat foller him; so I mut tack mi chice. An so I considderd, and thot as praps I mit not mend mi plaise, an id ene be as I was. If I has don rung, God forgee me. But I gan um a luk a tym or tew, ater mastr four waund me, wen I hard um a tawking cristen `lingo; an mappen I can se as for as a wysur mon, wan I do set mi witts to wurk, to eggs ham in the natur o things; an

wons the pairson had a yuge mind to be kworrilsom, an ficght old nic; fur he rubbit his honds, an spittid on um, an tuck up his bybill, an holdid it up, as uf so be hid a throed it amungs us, an now, sas he, I hool hav a bout uth the devvle, and I nos I shall beet him. An then he tould us as how a haputh o borm hood mack twenti lite domplins, an a haputh o God hood mack twenti lite soles. Now he shonna mak me bileve as a hapoth o borm ool mak twenti lite domplins; fer I nos our red lyin misser to well; an I do kweshton wother it hood mack ten; for us offens had um, wan mastr wos mastr. An as for a hapurth o God, furst an formust I dos nat thinck as they cold sell so small a mater, seein as how he be mad o sich pretchus stuf; an second an seckondly, I dos nat thinck as how they cold sell him

at hall; for he be evri boddis God, an heven poore carlos God for nothin. An then I hard a ooman methody as do com out o yorksheer; an bit ween yo, an me, an the post, I thot hur wus a letel bit ondacent. Hur spred out hur horms, an hur turnd up hur hys, an hur cryd, "jesus, cum doon, "nakid as ta is, an dunnot stey to "don thyself." So I dos sup hose that wile the men dos foller criste, the wimin dos mit him, to mak suer; but I thincks thy mut giv him tim to put his britchis on. An so dere muster mendal, no moor at this time; but may us all mit uth jy an plessure at winturdeal hall now, and in the blesfull and evvrlastin prisons of hour red hemer and saver heararter.

Yures to commend,

RALPH RUSSETTING.

LETTER LII.

TO RAFE RUSSETTING.

Winterdale, October 24, 1812.

DERE RAFE,

You knows that I am not hobligated to take no notice on you, being as you is not one of the hooper sarvants, sich as me and Muster Mendall, and I may say, Misses Orton and Missis Robbison; but as you has allwiss been a gain young man, and more hover has lived with us wen I was not quit so big as I be now, tho I was never no less than house skipper, I will lett you into the light of what is going forrad here; for, as I says somtimes, wisdum and nolleg be littel worth, if one do not tell them to somboddy. Now, as every boddy hear

knows the news, and as I knows noboddy that is not hear, but you; in coarse I must tell it to you, if I tells it at hall. And so, Rafe, I must tell you that you will not know Winterdale Hall, when you comes back. We has all sorts of wurkmen a turning the house out at the windoors. Menny a pretty mess I has with them, to be shure! I be arter Jinney night and day, to make her keep things a letell desent; but the men be so rubbitching, and hur be so ontidy, that God he knows I has enof to do. I has ofens wunderd, Rafe, how you could be so besotted and bewhiched, and befooled with that slut! You might stoop down, and pike up nothin anny time; but you might a hopend your eyes and a seen her betters, without gooing the lenth o your nose: but that is nyther hear nor thear.

My lady did not choos to leave hur ordurs with Muster Mendall, afeard master should make sowr facis, and thay should get him hanger; and so she ordured me to get the paneters and wite whashers all hover the house, the verry minnitt as I seed the backs on um, and acquordinly I did. But thay had no sunner sett thare brushes to work, than us seed a pose shayes drive up the park, and stop at the door; and a verry fine gentelman got out on it. Robbud run to hope in the door, and I stood in the hall, to resepshon him; and made him one of my best curkeys. Sur says I, I be verry sorey, but all the fammerley am out, and there be nobody at home but Mr. Mendall and me and the sarvants. Verry well, Misis Wochecalt, says he, I has my instrukshons, and I can heat with you and Muster Mendall. I shall

not be hear more than too days. I starred like a throatteled catt, and made a hunderd hopoligis, about hentertaning sich a grand strangur: and, at last, woldst thee beleeve it, Rafe, he turned out to be nothing but a polestur, from Lundon. And so he dind in my rum; and then he miserd and wrot down, and drunk tay and supt; and the necks day he hot and drunk, and miserd agen, till heed misserd his fill; and the necks morning he tuck himself hoff, in another pos shays. Im shure he gen twise the trubull that our good Muster Henry do, when he be at hoame. In about a wick, the Lord be good unto us, I thinks e my sole he louded thre Lundun waggings, there come sich a passil o things; and too men come down, and sot to wurk, like mad, and pooled down one thing, and put up anuther, till I be ommost

by side myself, and does not kno wich away to turn me. I sees a thing, with a head and fase at top, and a piller and post at bottom, and I says, What's this? Why, says thay, it be a spinks. Im shure I shud never reccoleckshon it, if it was not for the pinks in the gardin; tho you knos that sens I has been housskiper in a grate fammerly, and sosiated with ladys maids, I has made some leetel purfishes in hard wurds. Then I sees a pritty light thre leggit stool, and I says, Whats that? Why, says thay, it be a tripe pot. That, to be sure, I can remembeer; tho I should think it more propperer to nomminashon it a tripe tabul. But I has been a thinking, Rafe, whot master will say to hall this. My lady be a verry good lady, and Ile praise the brich that carrys me safe hover; but I shold be sadley afeared to stand in hur

shoos. Here, I that is but a sarvant, I can not abear to see the thick, ritch, silck damarsk curtings that I has tane sich care on, pooled down, and throed uppon the ground: and I cryd when I sid the grand, heavvy old cheers, guilded hall over with sollid goold, knoked about, like so many shives off a corn stack. I am shure I loved them curtings so well, that I never letten the son of heaven tuch um; for feard he shold spile the coulour; but allwiss kep the shooters two, winter and summer, and I never, upo no akwount laid a finger on the cheers, without a clean douster under it. And if I was so admurashon o the pure things, only by cause I had the looking artur um, what must master be, that has been brot up with um, as a boddy may say? for thay was parfit new when is father was marrid; and so thay be much about

his own age. If I was a going to be houskipper on my own bottom, Id try if I cold not beg um o the master; for I be shure I shold tay better care on um, than them nasty pole stars; but tho I has mony ennuf to kip house a miself, I has not yit fixed upon never a young man to kip me company; but, as I say, thats nyther here nor there. And so, Rafe, I hops you will continy to be ruddy and willing, and hobseekus, and you may be ashured of my continence, and feaver, and frenchip, which is all at present from

Your trewly affacshonat frand,

MARTHA STABLE.

LETTER LIII.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Winterdale, Nov. 1, 1812.

MY DEAR HARRIET,

WE arrived here last Wednesday; the Elringtons and Mr. Sharp leaving Aberystwith when we did. Sir Edward Halifax left the day before. A subject so much nearer my heart will scarcely let me stay to tell you that the latter gentleman took an opportunity to ask if I would grant him a ray of hope, and allow him to see me at Winterdale; I replied that his company must always be acceptable at Winterdale; but I begged that the only condition annexed to his visits might be—not to hope. He was going to make some remon-

strance, when I put a stop to all, by informing him of my engagement to Montgomery. He shook my hand in silence, and I saw him no more. Now to the subject which occupies every thought.

Yesterday I received a letter, with the post mark of the next town, containing these words.

" I shall be with you at five
" o'clock. If possible, let me find
" only Eleanor with you; as I wish for
" no other witness of the conversation
" which may pass between you and

" Your

" JAMES MONTGOMERY."

O, Harriet, how did my heart beat, to find Montgomery so near! to find that three hours would bring him before me! and how did I weary myself with conjectures respecting that conversation which every sound of my

watch brought one moment nearer. Was he coming to urge me to elope with him? I was resolved not to consent. Terrified by the menaces of his father, was he coming to give me up? I could not bear it. I shewed the letter to my mother, who called me a simpleton, for feelings I could not disguise. I sat down to table; but nothing could I eat.

The moment the cloth was drawn Eleanor and I left the room! my mother soon followed us to our drawing room; and, having given orders that Montgomery should be shewn up there, she left us to ourselves. I dared not go near a window, to see him approach; but sat at a distance, in a state of agitation I cannot describe. Eleanor, less interested, watched for him. I knew by her looks, she saw him; but I had not power to ask her, and

she did not speak. I heard the door open and shut; I heard his foot upon the stairs; and I was in his arms.

"My Charlotte," said he after a few moments, "we part no more!"

"Have you seen your father?" asked I, in a tremulous voice. "And "does he say we part no more?"

"I have seen him," replied Montgomery; "but I have not his sanc- "tion for coming hither."

"Then wherefore are you come?"

"To persuade you to be mine; and "then let fortune do her worst."

"Alas!" said I, "you know that "I should send you to a prison; im- "mure you within strong walls; that "you could only see the light of hea- "ven between iron bars!"—My lips quivered as I spoke, and I burst into tears.

"Impossible! My father is not a "barbarian."

" But he told me this himself."

" I know he did. I know he urg-
" ed so monstrous an argument, to
" prevail upon you to renounce me.
" But, do you think he would put his
" his threats in execution? Though
" not an indulgent parent, he is not
" tyrannical; he is not unjust; and,
" if he were, do you think it possible
" he thould let his son languish in a
" prison, while he revelled in a for-
" tune, which, by equity and natural
" right, belonged to his son's wife;
" and therefore ought to be responsible
" for her debts."

" I have no other reason to think
" so than his own positive assurance."

" Mere words to frighten you! If
" he were capable of such barbarity,
" do you think he would dare to prac-
" tise it? How could he look the
" world in the face? that world, to

" which, he told you, you were ac-
" countable, when you innocently
" smiled upon one man, while you
" professed to love another? Would
" not a monster be hunted from society,
" who despoiled a young woman of
" her patrimony under the sanction of
" the law; endeavoured, by threats
" and bribes, to shake her fidelity to
" his son; and finding them fruitless,
" suffered his son to starve in bondage,
" because he married her? It could
" not be. Believe me, my love, it
" was a stratagem. It was making a
" decoy of the best feelings of your
" nature, love and generosity, to en-
" tice you to do wrong."

There was an energy, a rapidity in the manner of Montgomery which almost overcame my reason. I exclaimed, " O, that it were no more! " we might yet be happy!" But,

recollecting myself, I added, " Sir " James, himself, told me that his " prejudices against me could never " be eradicated."

" If there is a mind so deaf to rea- " son, so blind to truth, as to harbour " prejudices never to be eradicated; " is such a mind fit to govern other " minds? The very structure of it, " would render it unfit, and absolve " us from our obedience. But my " father's is not such; though so re- " presented by himself. He admires " your openness, your candour; nay, " even your constancy; though his " sole purpose, in addressing you, was " to vanquish it. He was guarded in " his expressions, when he informed " me of the visit he had made you; " yet his relation of what had passed " was more in your favour than your " own."

" But he made no concessions with
" regard to admitting me into his fa-
" mily, did he?"

" He did not; and therefore am I
" come. As sure as I am that his pre-
" judices were not, at first, without
" some foundation; so sure I am that
" they have none, at present, and that
" he will be convinced of it. If he
" cannot trust a young creature, not
" habituated to error, but for once
" drawn into it; whose innate ideas
" of right and wrong discovered it to
" herself; whose feelings revolted a-
" gainst it; whose ingenuousness con-
" fessed it; whose dread of it is a se-
" curity for the future; and whose
" very diffidence makes the reliance
" stronger——become his daughter.
" Force his prejudices to fly before
" you; and let the knowledge of
" what you are banish from my father's

" breast the idea of what you have
" been."

" Montgomery, you furnish me with
" arms against yourself. I will admit
" what you say of me; for I feel I
" am such as you describe; but Sir
" James ought to be convinced of it
" before, not after, I am his daughter.
" If he cannot trust me now, what
" can he have to trust? Time, which
" will alter every feature of my face,
" may change every purpose of my
" heart."

" Never," said Montgomery, " un-
" less your perception of right and
" wrong be obliterated. But how is
" my father to form a correct opinion
" of you, if you do not consent to be
" mine? In what other character than
" that of his son's wife can you ap-
" proach him? In what other way

" give him an opportunity of retract-
" ing his errors?"

" I see none," said I, with a sigh.
" I must trust to time."

" My Charlotte," said Montgomery,
" you know not what hangs over your
" head. I dread to mention it; lest
" what might prevail upon another
" should make you still more unwil-
" ling to consent. Be satisfied to
" know that *this* is the time, and that
" every succeeding one will be less
" auspicious. The chaise that brought
" me is at the gate. I must go; for
" I have, with difficulty, obtained a
" short leave of absence: let me in-
" treat you, by every hope of future
" happiness, to go with me. Acquaint
" Lady Winterdale with your inten-
" tion. She will not oppose it. Per-
" haps our sweet cousin Eleanor will

" not desert her friend, on such an
" occasion; or, if that be too much
" to ask, she may lend you Mrs. Ro-
" binson. I have travelled night and
" day without stopping, except to
" change horses, to give us time to
" reach Scotland, before I must join
" the regiment. Happiness is before
" you, Charlotte; if the most faithful
" love, the most tender friendship, to
" my latest breath, and the esteem
" and admiration of my father, can
" constitute your happiness. Do not
" cast it from you, for want of reso-
" lution. Believe me, when I assure
" you that it will never be so easily
" attainable as now."

" Montgomery," said I, " I should
" not want resolution to act according
" to your wishes, if I were convinced
" they were right. Possibly, my own
" second them, and my resolution may

" be called forth to refuse you. But " I was determined against an elope- " ment, before the visit of Sir James. " I had suffered too severely from " concealment, ever to take another " step that should require it; and was " resolved to wait till I was deemed " capable of making my own choice, " and free to acknowledge it."

" But," said Montgomery, interrupting me, " do you apprehend that " a few months will make a difference " in your choice? When you have " passed the magic stroke of twenty- " one, do you expect to find faults " in me, that shall render me unworthy " of your love?"

" I hope I shall not live so see that " day, be it near or distant," said I.

" Then, to a mind like yours, my " beloved Charlotte, is the Tweed the " boundary of right and wrong? and

" shall we reject our happiness because
" we chance to live on that side of
" the river where happiness is not
" according to law? I revere the laws
" of my country; but they were made
" by man, and therefore are not per-
" fect. One may make you destitute,
" by stripping you of your just inhe-
" ritance; another may prevent you
" from chusing your partner for life,
" till new obstacles arise between you
" and the favoured object. It is evi-
" dent that the empire was divided on
" the expediency of the latter law;
" or it would have prevailed in Scot-
" land, as well as here. Scotland is
" the native country of our family,
" and, in this case, we have been wiser
" than our southern countrymen."

" I cannot argue with you," said I.
" The thing may be right in itself;
" but custom, and the very manner of

" it have made it wrong. I never " could have done it, without self " reproach; and, after the frightful " picture Sir James has drawn, it is " impossible."

" Then," said Montgomery, with a deep sigh, " I must draw a frightful " picture in my turn, which I wished " to have been spared."

" I will spare you. Sir James's " threats were not imaginary. I know " I am to lose my cause, and I know " the rest."

" Then, my dear Charlotte," said Montgomery, fixing his eyes mournfully upon me, " where, and how can " you live? We cannot expect my " father to be more conciliating when " the estate is actually his than now. " We cannot suppose he would be " more likely to redeem you from im- " prisonment than his son."

" I know it all," said I; " but little
" should I love you, and ill deserve
" your love, if I transferred my per-
" sonal danger to you; if I trusted to
" the workings of parental affection
" in the bosom of a man who has
" openly declared he will not listen to
" them. Did I possess any faculties
" which might set me free, I would
" exercise them to their utmost limits;
" patience should make my task light,
" and perseverance insure its accom-
" plishment. But these are idle
" thoughts: I cannot even provide the
" bread I must eat. My plan, how-
" ever, is formed. Before I come of
" age I will retire to some obscure
" cottage, at a distance, perhaps, in
" the north. There, in safety from
" the miseries which would attend
" me, if discovered, will I associate
" with the good wives and daughters

" of the village. They are cast in " the same mould with myself: the " only difference between us is that " they are rough from the mould, " while I have undergone a polishing. " I will eat their oaten bread, wear " the wool of their flocks, and sleep " upon the chaff of their grain. I will " learn to spin and knit as they do; " and the little I can earn will be " made sufficient for my existence, by " my mother, if she be spared to me; " and if not, by Eleanor."

I felt an unusual animation as I spoke. When I had ended, I observed tears trickling down the cheek of my cousin, while the countenance of Montgomery betrayed an undescribable emotion. At length, he exclaimed, " Romantic Charlotte! Is it for this " you sacrifice me?"

" This I will do," replied I; " not

" from romance; for few young women
" have less in their composition than
" I; but this is the natural level to
" which my folly has reduced me, and
" here I will abide. I have a spirit
" that will bend to my situation. When
" I fell from the splendor of the great
" world to the solitude of a lonely
" lodge I benefitted by the change;
" and when I shall sink to the ob-
" scurity of a cottage, I may not be
" the less deserving of your esteem."

" You will, if possible, be more so,"
returned Montgomery; " but if you
" loved like me you could not treat
" our final separation so lightly."

" I do not treat it lightly. I do not
" feel it lightly. I have need of all
" my resolution to carry me through
" it. But, my friend," continued I,
holding out my hand, " it depends
" upon yourself whether our separation

" shall be final, or only temporary.
" Whenever you are a rich man, I
" believe I shall not refuse you."

" Charlotte, my dear Charlotte," said Montgomery, " pressing my hand
" to his lips," do not place me in such
" a cruel situation as—I will not say
" to wish the death of my father; for
" that is too horrid, to impious a senti-
" ment to enter my breast—but, to
" look forward to that period for my
" own happiness. Let nothing, I be-
" seech you, come across my prayers
" for his life, which might lessen their
" fervency."

" Filial duty and affection will be
" your security."

" And what shall be my security
" that you will be mine at a time so
" uncertain ? perhaps so distant ?"

" My affection—if it do not change.
" I will not marry another man ; un-
" less I love him more than you."

" Ah! Charlotte! why are you not
" serious on such a subject?"

" I am more serious than you ima-
" gine. You shall judge of the future
" by the past and the present. I have
" not had a thought of happiness that
" has not been associated with your
" idea, since you first declared your
" love; and, if I own the whole truth,
" for some time before. I would sacri-
" fice every thing for you; but my duty.
" If I were my own mistress, and did
" not drag after me the weight of this
" unfortunate debt, I would share your
" pittance were it ever so small. I would
" teach my hands to milk cows, and
" make butter and cheese; while
" you sowed, and reaped, and gathered
" into barns; if necessity would have it
" so; and at night I would boil the pot,
" or toast the rasher, and sweep the
" hearth, against you came home. I

" would almost carry your knapsack—
" do any thing but starve. I will not
" promise to continue in the same
" mind, because my mind is not in my
" power, any more than my features
" or my stature; and, if it were, I
" should rather chuse you owed my
" compliance to my inclination than
" my bond. But, I have nothing
" within me that tells me I am likely
" to change. I loved Eleanor when I
" was four years old. Ask her if
" I do not love her still.

" My dear Charlotte, said Mont-
" gomery, your sentiments impress
" me with admiration; almost with
" reverence. Still I must think you
" romantic."

" As romantic as you please, then," said I; " but I have not yet been va-
" riable.

" Well, since you will have it so, I

" submit. Where I came resolved to
" conquer I yield."

" That many a tall fellow in a red
" coat has done before."

" I love your vivacity better than
" any thing, except your sensibility.
" But, my love, you will inform me
" of your retreat, and allow me to
" soften its inconveniences: to embel-
" lish it. You will allow me still to
" endeavour to convince my father of
" your merit; and see you, from time
" to time, to acquaint you with the
" progress I may make."

" No embellishment whatever. It
" is my business not to be noticed.
" With regard to Sir James's better
" opinion of me, may you seek to ob-
" tain it, and may heaven prosper
" your endeavours! Bring me the best
" tidings you can. I am not so fond
" of homespun woollen as to prefer it

" to muslin and sarsnet; or so much " attached to the company of farmers' " wives and daughters as to prefer it " to yours."

" But, my Charlotte, wherever you " go there may be a Henry Winter- " dale; and such a person, and such " accomplishments as yours cannot " long be hidden."

" I did not think of that," said I, gravely.

" You know I can be jealous."

" I do; and as I have a notion I " shall not be afraid of your scrutiny, " I allow you to be as jealous as " you please. I should doubt your " love if you were not alive to every " possibility of losing me. To obviate " the chance of that misfortune, chuse " my retreat yourself; and take especial " care there be no Henry Winterdale " in it, or near it, and, if you can, " that none ever pass through it."

" Such conduct as yours must find
" its way, at once, to my father's heart;
" to any heart not made of stone!
" What needs there more than this
" voluntary exile, to shew him what
" you are capable of."

" If it were voluntary; if the fear of
" these hateful Jews did not drive me;
" I might assume some merit in re-
" nouncing the pomps and vanities of
" this wicked world; but I am afraid
" the merit is theirs."

" You have renounced the world,
" and refused Sir Edward Halifax for
" me; and may I cease to breathe
" when I forget it."

" Mere selfishness," said I; " I hap-
" pened to like you better than both;
" and did it to please myself."

By such sallies as these did I endea-
vour to calm the troubled spirit of
Montgomery, and withdraw his an-

xious eye from the time which must elapse before I can be his: a period so uncertain that, considering the general uncertainty of earthly things, it may, probably, never arrive.

My mother now entered the room. Vain were her entreaties, and mine united with them, for Montgomery to stay all night; and equally vain our endeavours to prevail upon him to take some refreshment, when it was brought. At length I put a small piece of sandwich on his plate, and poured out a glass of wine. He ate and drank in haste, and in silence, and, when I would have helped him again, he removed his plate with a slight bow. Then, rising from his seat, he took my hand. "Charlotte," said he, "I take Lady "Winterdale and Miss Mowbray to "witness that you are mine. For our "present happiness, I wish the estate

" of our family could have been
" proved to belong to you. Not so
" proud of my choice as now, but
" with the hope of her generosity and
" her noble fortune satisfying my
" father, would I have presented to
" him my bride. Of that no chance
" remains; and the happiness of intro-
" ducing you without it is denied me
" by yourself. But the day will come
" —if circumstances change his opi-
" nion or yours, it may come soon—
" but it must come, that I shall claim
" you. I trust your heart; though I
" have not your word."

He kissed my hand, with fervency; and before Eleanor could ring the bell, he had left the room. My mother and my cousin followed, and left me to my own reflections. I fixed my eyes on the chair Montgomery had quitted; my spirits sunk after the exertion they

had made; my heroism and my levity alike forsook me; and, in an agony of grief, I cried, "You are gone, and I shall never see you more!"

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

LETTER LIV.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Winterdale, Nov. 7, 1812.

Happy is it for us mortals, my dear Harriet, who have so much pain interwoven with our pleasures, in this chequered life of ours, that our minds possess an elasticity, which rebounds after pressure. I have a letter from Montgomery, dictated by inestimable affection, which has aided the arguments of reason and the vivacity of youth, perhaps has done more than either, and I no longer experience the bitterness of anguish: but I cannot turn a thought towards our last sad parting without a pang I dread to feel.

A scene that passed on our arrival here would once have been the subject

of the first letter I had addressed to you; but these men, my Harriet; these men, when they become our lovers, throw all other things behind them.

When we entered the hall at Winterdale, we found it Egyptian! Startled, confounded, and almost, without daring to look at it, its unfortunate owner hurried into the eating room,—it was Grecian. Terrified and exasperated, he bounced into the drawing-room,—it was Chinese. He then took refuge in a small apartment called his study; where he found a few law-books, bound in parchment and rough calf; a desk, to write on; and a stuffed black leather chair, to sleep in, when tired of study or business; in short, found every thing as he left it. What he did there, I know not; but I apprehend the chair was more uneasy than he had ever found it before. To the servant who

was sent to summon him to dinner he made no answer. Mendall was the sole repository of what passed in his mind. He ordered an apartment to be prepared for him, for the night; but, unluckily it happened to be one that her ladyship had thought proper to modernize, and he ran down stairs, frantic, and took up his lodging in the great chair. He breakfasted, as he had dined, alone. Dinner made its appearance, and no Mr. Winterdale. Her ladyship, then, thinking he had had some time to digest what was not very palateable, ordered the dinner back, saying, "You young people will "have no objection to wait half an "hour. Mr. Winterdale must either "dine with us; or we will dine with "him. Come, let us go into his study, "and try to change the subject of his "meditations."

Henry absolutely declined interrupting his father, and Eleanor earnestly begged to be excused. I was proceeding in the same strain, when my mother insisted upon my accompanying her. "What is there in Mr. Winterdale so frightful that you dare not face him?" demanded she. "Neither he or you have done amiss; and, if I have, I am able to answer it." I followed her; she opened the door of the study, and we saw Mr. Winterdale, leaning his elbow on the table, and his head upon his hand. He raised his head as we entered; and then, without moving a muscle of his countenance, resumed his former position. My mother repeated, "O, that I were a glove upon that hand, that I might touch that cheek!" "Indeed," continued lady Winterdale, finding her apostrophe disregarded, "you look so like

Juliet, that the quotation from Romeo was irresistible; or I intended to have been very serious, because I am afraid you are so."

Again her ladyship paused. No answer. She went on.

"I will not suffer you to mope by yourself in this manner. Charlotte and I cannot dine without you; nor can Henry and Eleanor; though I could not persuade them to come and tell you so. We have sent the dinner back, and all four made a vow of starvation till you will join us."

Here was a fine opportunity for Mr. Winterdale to open. I expected to hear him say, "Starve, and be ——" a very naughty word. Still he chose to be silent. My mother seemed at a loss, for a moment. She was prepared for upbraidings and curses; but she hardly knew how to answer a man that

would not speak. At length she gently pulled the arm which supported the head; and the face, deprived of its prop, turned towards her, with an expression of mingled grief and anger.

"My dear Mr. Winterdale," said my mother, "you shall not persist in this obstinate, sulky silence. I have ordered two of your favourite dishes for dinner; you shall go with us into the eating-room; and, if you and I cannot accommodate matters without one of our entertaining dialogues, we will begin when the repast is over."

"Lady Winterdale," said her husband, "I will never eat with you again, till I know to what extent your plans are to be carried; whether there is any point at which you mean to stop; or whether my absolute ruin is resolved upon."

"Now," said my mother, "we shall come to a right understanding. We

may as well converse half an hour before dinner as after. The stewed carp will not spoil.—I take heaven to witness that your ruin is the last thing I think of."

"You never thought of your own, or the means to prevent it, till it stared you in the face."

"Very true, it came upon me quite unawares."

"You are pursuing the course you were before; and the same causes, dress, furniture, equipage, and company, will produce the same effects."

"Ah! said her ladyship, "one dear, one principal cause is wanting, London. I declare I do not think I could ruin you in the country. In dear, bewitching London it does, indeed, require some resolution not to ruin one's self. But I am so moderate in my wishes, that I never will ask you to take a house

in town, if I can help it. I will be satisfied with tolerable lodgings, for only two or three months in the spring."

"Lady Winterdale, you confound me. I have formerly given vent to passion and just resentment, in a manner that I thought would have made the boldest tremble; but your ladyship was armed with an impenetrable shield, and all my arrows fell blunted, to the ground. Upon this last provocation I determined to be silent; as I feel I am not your equal. I resolved to bury my griefs in my own bosom, till their measure was accumulated beyond all bearing, and till, like other intolerable burdens, they found their own remedy. But you urge me to speak. Having transformed the mansion of my ancestors into a thing I know not; having made me a stranger at home, and in-

volved me in an inordinate expence in so doing; you hunt me out of my poor little asylum, and out of my leathern chair." Mr. Winterdale's voice changed, as he said this; and the tear stole down his cheek.

I pitied him, and could scarcely restrain a respondent drop. Not so my mother; who replied, "Propriety altered your house Mr. Winterdale, and affection draws you from your chair. But I am astonished at your attachment to things so indifferent. What is it to you or to me whether the seat we sit upon be leather or velvet, ornamented or plain? Fashion decides these things; and he who acts in opposition to her dictates is ridiculous. I saw the necessity of conforming to custom; I knew your prejudices against it; and I saved you the trouble of contradiction, and myself the pain of hear-

ing it. I have no fancy for Chinese furniture and decorations, I hate Egyptian, and I could do very well without Greek; but one must be like other people. If you do not like these things, blame the world that runs mad after them, not me."

"If I were allowed to speak my sentiments," rejoined Mr. Winterdale, "and stood any chance of being heard, I should observe that the follies of what is called *the world* are no precedent for ours; and that the fancied obligation to be *like other people* has made more sinners than inclination. A higher authority than custom forbids us to 'follow the multitude to do evil."

"I bow to that authority," said my mother, "I would make custom arbiter only in things indifferent; such as the form and materials of a sopha, a chair, or a curtain: and I would not suffer

these to interfere with a duty—a duty I owed my husband. Though for myself, I would rather choose to exhibit other people's follies than my own; yet I have respected your opinions, and even your prejudices. I have not touched this comfortable little room. Here is your chair, the scene of many a quiet nap; here is your well-trodden carpet; and here are your desk and your books. I have done more; for your own apartment has not undergone the slightest change. When you honour it with your presence, you will find the identical bed you have slept in from your cradle; though I believe it was formerly occupied by Japhet and his wife; and the chairs you have sat on ever since you left your nurse's knee; though it requires antediluvian strength to move them. So far am I from being bigotted to modern shapes and stuffs,

that I prefer these to all others, when you share them with me."

"So sure as I began to state my grievances, so sure was I that your ladyship's reasoning would prove them to be benefits and advantages. It only remains for you to convince me that I am richer for all the sums of money you have expended."

"No," replied her ladyship, "I shall not attempt that, it is sufficient for me if you are happier; and that you are, let your own feelings, not my reasoning verify. Declare which is the more enviable being, the churlish Mr. Winterdale, secluded from the world, shrinking within his own porcupine-shell, and darting his quills at any unfortunate animal that happened to come within their reach: or the open-hearted, open-handed Mr. Winterdale, surrounded by an affectionate wife, whom he has

rescued from misfortune, dutiful and amiable children, Henry was always so, but I may be allowed to call my girls your children, for they regard you as a father—in a word, Mr. Winterdale, associating with his fellow-creatures, and dispensing pleasures and benefits to his family and neighbours."

"I cannot deny the brilliancy of your ladyship's style and arguments; nor do I deny that you have extended the circle of my enjoyments; but you sell your blessings at a very high price, and most dearly have I paid for them."

"You have exchanged imaginary riches for real. You have parted with money that you enjoyed in idea, for wealth that you can see and feel; that you see in the countenance, and feel in the kindness of every mortal that approaches you. What is so delightful in this world as to be loved by every creature in it."

"Very delightful, certainly, and I have laid out pretty large sums in this delightful commodity, since I have had the honour of being acquainted with your ladyship: but I own I do not see, in the present instance, how these imitations of foreign trumpery can contribute to my happiness, any more than I see that the money I must pay for them will increase my fortune. Your ladyship does not appear to me to have made these purchases with even *your* usual wisdom."

"Every atom of them indispensable," cried my mother. "You know I acknowledged just now, that chairs and tables were, in themselves, very insignificant matters; but when we are to receive Sir Drapery Classic, Sir Apis Hieroglyphic, and lady Bamboo, I should expire with shame to produce the heir-looms of fifty generations of

your family. The admiration of these, and other people will be value received for your money; and you are not so ignorant of proverbs, those wise saws of antiquity, as not to know that, *When one is at Rome, one must do as Rome does.*"

"I know," said Mr. Winterdale, with a sigh, "I am not wise enough to cope with your ladyship. To argue with you is to drain the ocean with a bucket. May I ask what these things will cost?"

"Now you have hit upon an argument I cannot answer," replied my mother. "I am as ignorant on this subject as the man in the moon. But, if you choose to know, you can write to the upholsterer for his bill."

"You may be assured I shall," said her husband. "I shall not add to the price of the articles, by taking credit.

With a gentleman of his taste, it would make fifty per cent difference, at least."

"Now Charlotte," said my mother, "ring the bell, for I do not see what more can be said on either side, and we will all go to dinner."

"Hold!" cried Mr. Winterdale, "I have one word more, before I dine."

"Be quick then," said his lady; "for Henry and Eleanor will be tired of waiting."

"Your ladyship dropped a hint about going to London, for two or three months in the year. Have you any such intention?"

"Why no," replied my mother, "not unless circumstances should require it."

"I have only one argument to oppose to such a project," rejoined Mr. Winterdale; "if you go to London, you

never see me more. I will endeavour to pardon the past, even down to your ornamental mummies—but, beware of the future. Instead of exhausting my anger in unavailing ravings, I may be urged to silent and irrevocable actions."

My mother looked disconcerted for a moment; but recovering herself, she exclaimed, "Barbarous man! to entertain a thought of leaving so good a wife! But I will be revenged on you; for I will behave so prettily that you shall find it impossible to live without me. Here is my hand, in confirmation of my promise; and I desire you will kiss it, in revocation of yours."

Mr. Winterdale put her hand to his lips.

"And now," continued my mother, "as I do not like your grace before meat so well as I hope you will like the meat

itself, we will go and bury all our grievances in the stewed carp."

Though, I dare say, neither Henry nor Eleanor thought the time of our absence long, their looks brightened when they saw us enter the eating-room in an amicable manner. When we retired after dinner, my mother related what had passed between herself and her husband to Eleanor; and I took that opportunity to tell her I could not have resisted the falling tear of Mr. Winterdale.

"Then Charlotte," said her ladyship, "you would have been more weak than wise. What is there so moving in the tear of avarice over its money bags? Or why should I give Mr. Winterdale such an advantage over me, as to let him see that whining could prevail, when reason and passion had been tried in vain?"

"Then your ladyship acknowledges he has reason on his side?" said I.

"Not absolutely," replied my mother, "there may be a little on both sides."

"But I hope," returned I, "that you do not mean to go to London."

"Shallow politician!" exclaimed my mother, "I follow the example of the immortal Mr. Pitt. Whenever he had done, or intended to do any great mischief, he thundered out a greater; and the people, thankful in escaping the second, received the first as a favour. Do not you see that the fear of going to London has made Mr. Winterdale pocket the upholsterer's bill?"

"But did not you observe," said I, "the threat you provoked him to denounce against you?"

"I did," replied my mother, "and shall not forget it. It is not my inten-

tion to drive Mr. Winterdale out of his house; but if I can govern him with an absolute sway in it, and contrive at the same time, to make myself adored for my despotic authority, I shall be as good a model for wives as the great statesman was for ministers."

Any comment from me on the politics of lady Winterdale would be more than superfluous, it would be presumptuous. I shall, therefore, only inform you that peace was thoroughly established in my mother's dominions, and that

I am, very sincerely yours,

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

LETTER LV.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Winterdale, Nov. 14, 1812.

MY DEAR HARRIET,

THE drawing room of my mother sparkles at this moment with a lustre that reminds me of former days; and I retire to write to you. Not that I have any objection to splendour; or even to shine myself; not that my regard for you, great as it is, demands this sacrifice; but from a heart ill at ease. My fate is decided, or being decided, at this very hour. To-day the Montgomery cause is heard.

Were the contest between riches and poverty, only, though I am fully alive to the good things money can

command; I think I should hold it light. I can fancy myself happy with Montgomery any where, and any how; so love and health were of the party, and want excluded. But when the question is to live or not live with him, at times I feel myself a coward. I must, however, rouse my spirit into exertion; for if my being his depends upon the award of chancery in my favour, I must prepare myself for disappointment. My counsel doubt; my honest attorney despairs; and Mr. Winterdale has disposed of my estate to my adversary. I am exactly in the situation of a patient given over by the physicians, and now and then lending an ear to an ignorant old nurse, who cries out, "while there is life, there is hope."

I remained in the drawing room till I lost deal, revoked, and could not

count my tricks; when I left it to talk of family affairs to you.

The every-day visits of the Elringtons at Aberystwith, are continued since our return home; and Mr. Francis has taken advantage of this friendly intercourse to unbosom himself to the gentle Eleanor. He has lamented to her the arbitrary and ungrateful behaviour of his father; admired the sweet and patient temper of his mother; and, having thus given her an interest in their domestic concerns, has ventured to declare his esteem and love for herself. The esteem she accepted, graciously; the love she returned upon his hands.

Henry Winterdale, too, has declared in words, what looks and sighs, and delicate attentions have long left no room to doubt. He asked Eleanor's permission to mention his attachment to his father.

Eleanor, in return, looked—but it was upon the carpet—and sighed, and blushed, and hesitated, and imagined Mr. Winterdale would not approve it.

Henry was troubled with no such imaginations. "Charlotte's misfortune," said he, "will be our security. Amiable as you both are, the Montgomery estate would have given her the preference in my father's esteem; and I will not deny, what your own penetration may, perhaps, have discovered, that his plan was to unite that estate with his own, by my marriage with the heiress. He is now convinced it cannot be hers; she is no longer an heiress; and his plan is broken."

"But," said the modest Eleanor, "it is as certain that you might obtain a fortune superior to mine, as it is that you deserve it."

"The latter part of your reply I will

never admit," said Henry, "and the former I will never attempt. Here will I fix," continued he, "taking her hand, which she made no effort to withdraw, "if I have an advocate in your bosom. My father, who knows you, cannot expect to find your equal. Your retired and simple habits are his own; you have already shewn him the affection of a daughter; your income, with what he may think proper to add to it, will be sufficient for our limited desires; and the happiness of his son will be built on a solid foundation. If my father were to chuse for me, his choice could fall on no other than you."

"You flatter me, and deceive yourself," said Eleanor. "How can I expect Mr. Winterdale should be satisfied with my fortune, even if it were possible he should be so with me?"

"You, my sweet Eleanor," replied Henry, "are all that is good and lovely; and I will not waste a word to convince you that my father must think so. Your fortune would content any reasonable man; and my father's ideas on that subject are more reasonable than they were."

"I have only one favour to beg," said Eleanor; "if Mr. Winterdale should shew any reluctance, that you will give up the matter immediately."

"Give up my Eleanor while I believed she loved me!" exclaimed Henry. "This world has nothing could tempt me to do it. Be assured of my father's approbation. He cannot withhold it. He cannot be insensible of merit like yours. Though unobtrusive, it is visible in every look, word, and action; and he has witnessed these every day and hour. But, were

it possible he could oppose my desire; as it would be without reason, it would be without effect. To chuse for himself is the natural privilege of every human being, and I will not basely give up my birthright."

Poor Eleanor dropped a tear, in which love, gratitude, and admiration had each a share. It fell upon her hand, and Henry took it off with his lips. "I go this instant to my father," continued he, "to lay before him my wishes and my hopes."

"Stop a moment," cried Eleanor. "You know your sole dependence is upon him."

"Your income would be riches to me," rejoined Henry, "if you would allow me to share it, till I could place you in a more elevated situation; and if we had neither that resource nor any other, as I feel my independence

in my own breast, I would maintain it by my bodily strength. I would hold the plough, and wield the flail for my subsistence, as I told Mr. Sharp I had formerly done for my amusement. Would you, my beloved Eleanor," demanded he, "be content to support me, if what I believe impossible should happen?"

"I could not speak," said Eleanor, when she related this conversation to me, "but I just ventured to lift my eyes to his, and he darted out of the room. And now," added she, "he is with Mr. Winterdale in the study, and I tremble to think what may be the consequence."

"Well may you tremble," replied I; "for you will be his wife; and what will be the consequence of that, heaven only knows."

Poor Eleanor remained between

hope and fear; very seriously persuading herself that what she wished could not happen; yet secretly believing that it might; till we heard Henry's foot quick upon the stairs, and saw him enter our drawing room. We anxiously sought his intelligence in his face. Gay was his air, and brilliant were his eyes, when I asked him—for my cousin could not—the result of his conference with his father.

"As I foretold," replied he. "Eleanor is mine."

"Thank God for it," said I. "Our Eleanor would say so too; but you see, she cannot speak."

She cast on me a look of reproach, though not of anger; while Henry drew a chair close to hers, and seated himself beside her. I placed mine close to his. "Pray," said I, "make me a party in the good news; for I

rejoice at it almost as much as yourself: and have the goodness to give it in detail; for though my cousin seems not to be interested in it, I assure you I am."—Another look from Eleanor. "My dear friend," said I, "you look more like a god than a goddess; for you look two ways at once. You ought not to reprove on both sides the question. But begin, Henry, and never mind her."

"I told my father," said Henry, "that I was going to address him on a subject in which I was deeply interested. I paused a moment, at a loss how to proceed." "Your love for Miss Mowbray, I suppose," said he.

"I then proceeded to inform him that his conjecture was right; that I loved her as ardently, and as truly, as man could love a woman." "That," replied my father, "is only saying

you are guilty of the utmost folly and nonsense man is capable of. I know enough of love to be convinced less is sufficient. I loved your mother, and well she deserved it, for I begin to think she was too good for me, but I neither took pleasure in her company or bewailed her loss. I love Lady Winterdale. If I did not, I should either hang myself or run away from her; indeed she may drive me to one of these expedients yet."—"But, Charlotte," said Henry, interrupting himself, "I do not know whether I ought to proceed, when Lady Winterdale is the subject?"

"By all means," answered I. "Mr. Winterdale is extremely welcome to all he can say upon that subject, and upon myself into the bargain; so he will but raise Eleanor in proportion as we fall."

"You will find you have not wholly escaped." said Henry. "Women have long been accounted necessary evils, continued my father, and I am afraid her ladyship comes under that description. That she is an evil of the first magnitude cannot be doubted, and I wish she had never fallen in my way. It is true I have the remedy in my own power; but if I can keep her within any tolerable bounds I shall not have recourse to it. She has so much beauty, ease, and good humour that I shall drag my chain as long as I can bear it. To tell you the truth, I begin to suspect she has a stronger hold on my affections than I imagined; but as for all the love that man can feel for woman, I despise the notion."

"May you be long happy with Lady Winterdale, Sir," said I, "and may she become all you could wish. Good

sense, and good nature leave room to hope for it. My future happiness depends upon my union with Miss Mowbray; I presume you can have no objection to it."

"I have not," returned my father. "You must marry; and, therefore be hen-pecked or miserable: miserable, if you struggle against female domination; hen-pecked if you submit to it; for you may depend upon it that even the gentle Eleanor has woman enough in her to try to be master. You are fortunate, however, that she has none of Lady Winterdale's blood in her veins. I did think of Charlotte, as I formerly told you. She has a tincture of her mother's composition in her, extravagance and levity; but her fortune might have made some amends. That is gone; she has chosen for herself; and she is fitter for the wife of a

rakish officer than a sober country gentleman. Charlotte is a good girl too, upon the whole; frank, honest, and affectionate; but you are wiser in chusing the daughter of a country parson than of Lady Winterdale. Not that I like parsons, either."

Here Henry paused. "Is that all," demanded I.

"No," replied Henry, "there is one circumstance more, which I am afraid to mention lest it should offend you both."

"Proceed," said I. "We will arm ourselves with good humour."

"My father insists upon our marriage taking place immediately," said Henry, addressing himself to Eleanor.

"You might be sure that would offend Miss Mowbray," said I. "It is well such a monstrous proposal is not

your own." Eleanor betrayed great emotion, and some fear; but remained silent.

"He says," continued Henry, "that she is in a bad school for a wife; and may soon learn more of Lady Winterdale than she ought to practise."

"That is an abominable libel," said I; "because it is true. But, Henry, what an inconsistent jumble of atoms is that lordly animal, man! I believe Mr. Winterdale is right, in saying we were made to govern you. His reason discovers every failing of his wife; yet her fascination binds him to her! He fears her example for the wife of his son; yet is content to submit to her, as his own!"

Henry went on to inform his intended bride that his father proposed their residing at the lodge, and would settle an income on them adequate to their

proper establishment; and he did not quit her, till the eloquence of love had prevailed upon her to regard their approaching union, without being irreconcileably offended.

Now good night, and to bed, Harriet. Not to sleep; for I shall see all around me judges and counsellors, solitary imprisonment, hard labour, hard fare, and woollen robes; except in one little corner, where I shall catch a glimpse of love, liberty, and Montgomery. Monday brings an account of the decision to

Your

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

LETTER LVI.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Winterdale, Nov. 21, 1812.

MY DEAR HARRIET,

THE Montgomery cause has been heard, but is not decided. The proofs on both sides were so many and so complicated, that they could not all be examined, and the hearing was postponed for a month: I have, therefore, three more weeks to be haunted by the apparitions I mentioned in my last. All I understand of the matter is that Sir James has established his claim in a manner that my counsel believe cannot be controverted.

I wish it were over. One of the wise men of the bible says, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." I

have nothing to hope; yet am I very sick. My only cordial is the letters of Montgomery; and, precious as they are, they seem almost like a cordial set upon a shelf, which I am forbidden to taste, till I know whether it suit my case or not.

If company could charm my mind, we have it almost to dissipation. The Elringtons have had two grand dinner parties, since our return from Aberystwith, for the purpose of introducing us to every family within the reach of a visit. All left cards at Winterdale, and had ours, in return. Invitations, on all sides, followed of course; and parties for eating, dancing, music, and cards, have trodden upon each other's heels. The bridal paraphernalia of Lady Winterdale has been delayed, not forgotten; and the high priests and priestesses of that temple of fashion,

Bond-street, have been called upon to officiate in the decoration of her person. This would once have occasioned a mutiny in the state; it is now considered as among the regular order of events.

Mr. Winterdale has, of his own free will, declared to his lady that he will receive every body, and visit every body, once; to give his sanction to her company; and that afterwards he will be at liberty to follow his own inclination; which, by that time, I imagine, will correspond with hers. My mother is all gaiety and all sweetness; and, at home or abroad, makes her husband the principal object of her attention. No remark of his, however trifling, falls to the ground. She waits a moment, to see if it is noticed by another: if it is not, she replies to it herself; places it in the fairest light,

and adds to its consequence. In a word, she draws him out, and draws more good sense out of him than any person ever suspected was in. Shy, and almost timid himself, his face shines with gratitude for such distinction.

The lodge is taken for Henry and Eleanor, and workmen are employed in fitting it up for their reception. This has exposed us to an attack from Mrs. Thacker and Mr. Sharp.

"I *wow* and declare, my dear Lady Winterdal," said the lady, "I'm *purdigiously* happy in catching your ladyship at home. Since you have got that there beautiful carriage of yours, one comes, and comes, and you're always a gadding. But I must not be angry; for, egad, I believe I should do so myself. We hear strange news, here! All the windows of the Lodge open! men knocking and hammering, paint-

ing and papering, like the deuce! People say Mr. Henry's going to have Miss Mowbray!"

"All the people in the world cannot make me believe that," said Mr. Sharp. "Now, my dear Miss Mowbray now, is not it very shocking for people to come to go to raise *sich scandelous* reports? For my *bootiful* lovely Miss Mowbray to prove false-hearted, is what nobody shall *iver* make me think on; when, here, I've followed her, morning, noon, and night, for this six months, and done all that *iver* lay in my power to make myself agreeable! You could not be so cruel, could you?"

"If such a report were true, Sir," replied Eleanor, "you could not accuse me of either cruelty or injustice; as I never encouraged the partiality you honoured me with."

"Not encouraged the partiality I

have honoured you with!" repeated Mr. Sharp. "I wonder at you for saying *sich* a thing! Have not you always been sweet-tempered, and good-*hoomered*, when I was kind, and obliging? and did not you give me reason to expect that I should, one day or other, find you *compliable*, and then I should take you while you was in the mind?"

"I told you positively, Sir," answered Eleanor, "my mind could not alter, on that subject; and I did not think it necessary to be rude and savage, to convince you of it."

"But I know," rejoined Mr. Sharp, "that young ladies do alter their minds on that subject, whether they will or not; and, moreover than that, that they do not always speak their mind, *partickilarly* when then they say, No. I am sure I've had encouragement

enough; and even Mr. Winterdale, his own self, encouraged me."

"Come, come," said Mrs. Thacker; "you lovers are not in the way to make it up, I see. I'll tell you what I think is the upshot of the whole business. Mr. Henry Winterdale is a very handsome gentleman, and a very genteel gentleman, and a gentleman that any lady might like; but, first come, first *served*. Mr. Sharp, though I say it, that should not say it, is as good as any gentleman in the land that is not nobility; and he had the first chance; and I'm sure Miss Mowbray would not use him ill for nobody."

"O dear heart, alive! aunt," said Mr. Sharp, "I protest you make me quite ashamed! I must own and confess that I am no ways comparable to Mr. Henry Winterdale; though, perhaps I could keep a lady better than

he could, especially at present, in his father's life time. But, as to my having the first chance, that's what I think myself."

"But," said my mother, "you surely cannot imagine that the circumstance of having first declared your attachment to a young lady intitles you to a preference?"

"Why not?" demanded Mr. Sharp. "If I may venture to come to go to speak my mind, what business had he to take the liberty to declare himself after?"

"That is a question which belongs to Mr. Henry to answer," said my mother.

"No," returned Mr. Sharp, "I do not wish him to answer it; and, as he is not here, you may as well please to be so kind as not to tell him of it, for fear he should think I am not quite so polite as I should be. But have the goodness to be so obliging as to

favour me with an answer yourself. Does not your ladyship think that when I courted Miss Mowbray first, she would be very false-hearted to go to have any other?"

"I think, by that title Miss Mowbray could never be yours," replied my mother; "for it is not to be supposed that a young woman of her beauty, merit, and fortune, has not been addressed by some gentleman before yourself. Don't you think so, Mrs. Thacker? I dare say you did not find it necessary to accept of the first lover who declared his passion for you."

"O, no, to be sure," said Mrs. Thacker; "your ladyship is *purfitly* right. I'm certain I refused a dozen gentlemen, and some of them Londoners, too, before I could be *prevailed* upon to marry my gentleman."

"O, dear Aunt," cried Mr. Sharp,

" now I'm *ruinated!* How could you go to say such a thing as that! Now Miss Mowbray will *niver* have me, as sure as a gun! But, *howiver*, there's one hope *yit*. I'm positive sure you did not behave to your gentlemen with so much sweetness and kindness, and good-*hoomer* as she has done to me. You could not do that!"

" O, nothing at all like it," replied Mrs. Thacker. " I was *wery* cruel, indeed. Nobody would never come near me twice. But all this is foreign to the *subjick*. Somebody is going to live at Ravenhill Lodge, that's certain; and who can it be but Mr. Henry Winterdale? But he is not *obligated* to marry Miss Mowbray, neither. For my part, I *suspeck* it's you, Miss Montgomery; and your sitting there, mumchance, is never a bit the less like it."

"I am afraid," said I, "worse luck attends me."

"What ill luck are you afraid of, Charlotte?" demanded Mr. Winterdale, who entered the room while I was speaking.

"I am afraid I shall never be so fortunate as to marry Mr. Henry Winterdale," answered I.

"No," said Mr. Winterdale; "I believe that fortune, be it good or bad, is reserved for another."

"And pray, Sir," said Mr. Sharp, "may I be so bold as to take the liberty of asking who the lady is?

"You may ask who the lady is, and I will tell you," replied Mr. Winterdale; "but you never took the liberty to be bold, in your life."

"O, dear, Sir, I must say you are the very *obligingest* gentleman in all the world. I must confess I am quite

anxious to know; because it may happen that I have a *leetle*, tiny, bit of an interest in it, myself."

"The young man has made his own choice; and our fair Eleanor is the object of it. I was not consulted, till all was fixed."

"Going to have Miss Mowbray!" exclaimed Mr. Sharp.

"Going to marry Miss Mowbray!" exclaimed Mrs. Thacker.

"I always thought, Sir," said the lady, "that you intended Miss Montgomery for your son. I'm sure I never saw you behave with such monstrous politeness to nobody else."

"Whatever my intentions were was of no consequence; for, as I told you before, my consent was not asked, till matters were settled between themselves."

"But, surely, Sir," said Mrs.

Thacker, " you are not a gentleman to let your own son do just whatever he pleases, and never be the man to say no to it!"

" No," said Mr. Sharp, " I'm positive certain Mr. Winterdale can *niver* let himself down to that! He can *niver* let his own son mount upon his own shoulders! And I humbly hope, Sir, you will let Mr. Henry know that he is not to be your master. Be so kind, Sir, as to tell him your mind about Miss Mowbray."

" I have done that," replied Mr. Winterdale. " I have told him that I believe he can no where find a young woman so deserving."

" My gracious!" cried Mr. Sharp; " then all is over, indeed! I always expected to have had Miss Mowbray, myself, Sir. I have been waiting for her all this time, and doing *ivery think*

in the world to gain her favour. I've always walked with her, and sat next to her, and helped her to *ivery think;* and, you know, Sir, you gave me leave to follow her to Aberystwith; and my Aunt Thacker always told me I was quite sure of her. But now, Sir, if you go to say that Mr. Henry has got her consent, and they have both got your consent; why, I don't know what to think of it: I am afraid I must be forced to give it up, whether I will or no: though I must take the liberty to be allowed to say that I don't think it the very best and genteelest treatment that *iver* I met with in all my life."

"It's a bite!" cried Mrs. Thacker. "I'm sure if any gentleman had come after me, I'd ha' given him a good smack o' the face, to let him know what he had to trust to; before I'd ha'

let him ha, wasted his time over me for nothing."

"Perhaps thou might'st not have found thy aunt's the genteelest treatment that *iver* thou met'st with in all thy life," said Mr. Winterdale; "but I cannot call it unreasonable; for if no words could make thee feel, blows might properly have been tried. However, as ladies are so hard-hearted, if I were in thy place, I would go home, and comfort myself, by marrying my housekeeper."

"Mr. Sharp," said my mother, "do not let your ill success with Eleanor make you despair of another lady. Henry, you know, had the advantage of living in the same house with her; and I have reason to believe her heart was his, before you attempted to gain it."

"Ah!" cried her husband, "that

living in the same house is the devil! what unlucky things has it brought about!"

"Mr. Winterdale has a strong talent for satire," resumed my mother, still addressing herself to Mr. Sharp; "and neither you nor I can escape our share."

"Well," said Mr. Winterdale, "if thou dost not like that plan, remain at the parsonage. I shall always be glad to see thee; and shall always find thy company entertaining."

Mr. Sharp made his serious acknowledgments, and he and the lady took their leave; as, for the present does

Your,

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

LETTER LVII.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Winterdale, Nov. 28, 1812.

MY DEAR HARRIET,

I BELIEVE the time is not far distant, when my mother and Mr. Winterdale, having both tried their strength, will, according to her original idea, sit down and be quiet. Possibly the skirmish which happened this morning may be one of the last.

" I have been thinking of the most delightful scheme imaginable," said Lady Winterdale to her husband, as we were sitting round the breakfast table; " I am sure you will be charmed with it. We will celebrate Henry's marriage by getting up a play; and I do not know that we can fix upon a

better than *Much ado about Nothing.* You will make an admirable Governor of Messina; Henry and Charlotte shall perform Claudio and Hero, (for we will excuse the bride); I shall not make a contemptible Beatrice myself; Mr. Sharp may take the part of Dogberry, if he has sense enough to play the fool; and the Elringtons may support the inferior characters: but what shall we do for a Benedick? I am quite at a loss for a Benedick! I wish Montgomery were here."

Here her ladyship paused, for an answer; but her husband making no reply, she added, "Don't you think it a charming plan?"

Mr. Winterdale's answer was short, but expressive—"No theatricals!"

"But," resumed his lady, "on further consideration you cannot but

approve it. The expence will be trifling. I would not have entertained a thought of it, if we had had a theatre to build; but our great hall is sufficiently spacious both for the performance and the audience; and it is now elegantly fitted up. We shall want nothing from London, but a few scenes, dresses, and decorations: the next town can furnish the seats." Again my mother paused.

"No scenes, dresses, and decorations," said Mr. Winterdale, firmly.

"It would be quite economical," rejoined his lady. "We should entertain as many people for one pretty, light, cold supper, as the Elringtons do with eight or ten massive, smoaking dinners. Besides, what an honour it would be to our taste! What a noise it would make in the county! It would find its way into all the newspapers on

the Wye and the Severn, and be chronicled, with the wedding, even in town. Come, Mr. Winterdale, I know you have too much taste to follow the beaten track, and trust to your cook for the entertainment of your company; and you have too much good sense to object to any proposal of mine, without giving some reason for it. You give none against this."

"Heaven has not bestowed upon me the talent to reason with your ladyship," said Mr. Winterdale, "and I will no longer presume to attempt it. I shall only say that I will have no plays in my house—while I am in it."

"Well," said my mother, "if you are obstinately bent upon neither performing yourself, or seeing us perform, we will get up our play some other time, when you are from home, upon business, and will not be troubled with it."

"Lady Winterdale," replied her husband, "now we are upon this subject, I will say a few words, which I hope I shall not have occasion to repeat. You have hitherto disposed of my fortune according to your own fancy; but you have done it in a manner suitable to my rank; except in the alterations and furniture of my house. A carriage, company, and dress, accord with my station; and, though I was content without them, I am sensible of their propriety. Furniture was also, in some degree necessary; but here you stepped beyond the bounds of propriety; and I forgave you. To turn the mansion of a plain country gentleman into a playhouse would be an expence without a pretext; a folly without excuse. If you persist in it, take the consequence; which I now tell you will be food for repentance." So saying, with an air

which had more of dignity in it than I ever saw before, he left the room.

Henry rose, and, approaching my mother, said, with great earnestness, I intreat you, Madam, not to embitter the happiest time of my life, the time which gives me my Eleanor, by an exhibition so repugnant to my father's feelings. So far from taking any part in it, I could not be present at it."

"Dear Madam," said Eleanor, rising, and arranging herself by the side of her future spouse, "instead of doing me honour, it would be to me the greatest misery! I would not, for the world, enter Mr. Winterdale's family under circumstances which must give him such pain!"

> "Ah! sure a pair was never seen
> So justly form'd to meet by nature!"

exclaimed Lady Winterdale. "You are, indeed, an exemplary couple of

mortals, and God forbid I should be the first to disturb your married tranquillity! You may be assured I have had enough of *Much ado about Nothing*, without the play."

When Henry had quitted the room, I ventured to express, to my mother, my serious apprehensions that she would trifle with Mr. Winterdale's temper too far; and provoke a vengeance she might endeavour to avert, when it was too late.

"Fear it not, Charlotte," replied she: "it is impossible to be more cautious than I am. I feel every step of my way before me; and, by that means, discover, how far I can go with safety, and where I ought to stop. I will not lose a hair's breadth of the ground I have gained; and wherever it is possible, I will add a hair's breadth to it; but I own to you that I believe

I shall not be able to proceed much further. While Mr. Winterdale blustered, and dealt about his random blows, like a madman, my coolness parried them, and they were lost. When he becomes cool and determined, like myself, the advantage is more equal; and we are come to the point most married folks arrive at: that is, I am master ninety-nine times in a hundred; because he will not undergo the struggle necessary to conquer me; and he is master the hundredth; because he is resolved to prevail. You are too good Eleanor," continued my mother, addressing herself to my cousin, " to follow my example, and Henry is too good to give you occasion; but, take my word for it, my dear, that the generality of the married High Mightinesses will concede that to fear, which they will refuse to gratitude and reason;

and if a wife will not be sometimes the conqueror of her husband, she must be always his slave."

"Indeed," said Eleanor, "I am not formed for a state of warfare. Love and peace must be the blessings of my married life; or it will be most wretched. I am thankful to providence that my Henry will not require unreasonable submission; for, if he did, I could not refuse it."

"It is scarcely possible," said I, "for your ladyship to find two pupils who would profit less by your admirable precepts and example; because, I humbly conceive that, to reduce them to practice one must not feel. Now, if I had offended my husband, whether justly, or not, I should feel. If I did not betray my uneasiness by words, I should by silence, which would be construed into sullenness, and, perhaps,

might soon become such. I might sit down to table with him, when it would require an effort to say, May I help you to some of this? and when I should hardly know in what tone to say it. I should find such a situation so intolerable, that, believe me, I should burst into tears; throw myself into his arms; and ask forgiveness, whether I were right or wrong."

"I am glad I have a little less feeling, and a little more prudence than a couple of love-sick girls," said my mother. "I will, however, give you two or three truisms; though I utter them, not to the winds, but, to the gentle zephyrs.

"In this wicked world, whoever *will* submit, be it man or woman, *must* submit. Farther, if you stoop, of your own accord, you must be trampled on, whether you will or no. Few are the

human beings who will not abuse power; and many a planter in the West Indies has become a brute, that, in England would have made a good master. And now, my dear girls, I am so far from wishing you to profit by my maxims, that I would have you go home, and kiss the rod—that is—your husbands."

I fear, my dear Harriet, my mother's truisms cannot be disproved by me. But certainly gratitude cannot be wholly extinct in the breast of man; and a gentle and affectionate behaviour, on the part of a wife, must find the way to it! Whatever be its reward, such, if ever I am a wife, shall be the conduct of

Your

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

LETTER LVIII.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Winterdale, Dec. 5, 1812.

MY DEAR HARRIET,

At a time when my affairs stand still, and my ideas are whirling about with increased velocity, it is fortunate to have met with a novel that could arrest my attention, and is not undeserving of yours. My mother and Mr. Winterdale begin to understand each other's strength, and have laid by their arms; Henry and Eleanor are waiting for lawyers and workmen; and I for the fiat of my Lord Chancellor, which will doom me to banishment. A very short time will make my cousin a bride and me a fugitive. In the interim, allow me to talk to you of Hermsprong; or Man as he is not; which, inverting the order those authors are usually placed in, I rank with Smollett, and above Fielding and Richardson.

The plot of Hermsprong is sufficiently interesting, without being improbable. Two of the incidents, Miss Campinet's escape from her father's house, and Hermsprong's declaration of his family, though natural, are quite unexpected. The characters are admirably conceived, and uniformly supported.

The character of Hermsprong is so exactly what Man *might*, and *ought to be*, that we are surprised to find it what he *is not*. The basis on which it is formed is truth and rectitude.—What so natural! so easy! yet it is so uncommon that the character is new. His father's precept was, *Do always what is right:* and his illustration of it, *In most human occurrences the right is at once seen and acknowledged. When discrimination is necessary, discriminate with strength and with care. When you have judged, that is the right to*

you. In civilised society this may be sometimes difficult, especially where dependence imposes fetters on the mind; but it is much more practicable than practised. At least, I feel so much of the Hermsprong in me that, like Moliere's Bourgeois Gentilhomme, who had spoken prose all his life, without knowing it; I have made it my rule of action, without being sensible that I had a rule. I have sometimes lain under the imputation of obstinacy for adhering to it; but I have generally repented, when I have been persuaded to deviate from it. In the fatal instance which imposes the penance of my future days, I erred against my ideas of right, in expending more money than I had then to expend; but I conformed to them in procuring money at my own cost, to discharge just debts, however foolishly contracted.

But to return to Hermsprong.

Miss Fluart is the second female personage in almost every novel. The heroine is always tender and sentimental; so is Miss Campinet. Her friend, by way of contrast, is generally lively, and, if the author know how to make her such, arch and witty; so is Miss Fluart. But, from the days of Richardson, who first drew the character, and called it Charlotte Grandison, to the present, never did I meet with Miss Fluart's equal. She is always arch, and always witty; yet seldom, very seldom, oversteps the modesty of nature. Her scenes with Lord Grondale, particularly that in which she presents herself to be married, instead of Miss Campinet, are inimitable. I only wish her intrepidity had carried her out of the house without a pistol.

Doctor Blick is a new character—

on paper. In common life it abounds all over the kingdom; but the many do not see it, and the few dare not tell it. Party and politics have made dreadful havoc with the christian charity of Englishmen; and, especially, of the English clergy.

Sir Philip Chestrum, a mother-spoiled boy of six and twenty, is not so well drawn as the rest. As Boileau says, *Rien n'est beau que le vrai, Nothing is beautiful that is not true;* and the vulgarity of Sir Philip is, in a baronet, below the truth.

The landlord of the Golden Ball, who served under Marshal Keith, is so well sketched that I wished to have seen him again. The scene at his house equals any thing I ever met with; so does Hermsprong's letter to Miss Campinet, on his going to America, and his conversation at Mrs. Garnet's,

on the same subject; so do more scenes than I can enumerate.

There is a lady in this neighbourhood, who was an intimate friend of Robert Bage, the author of Hermsprong. I learn from her that he was a manufacturer of paper, at Elford, near Lichfield; adored by his family, but little known to the rest of the world. His friendships were few; but warm and steady; his integrity was incorruptible; and his manners were courteous. He wrote his first novel, Mount Henneth, to divert his mind under a serious loss of property, occasioned by an unsuccessful speculation in iron works; and declared writing to be the best medicine for grief within his knowledge.

Mr. Bage corresponded with the lady from whom I received this information, and I have been favoured with

the sight of many of his letters. They are remarkable for ease, grace, and brevity; and also for a peculiar turn, a manner, which no words that I am mistress of can express; and which, in my opinion ranks him still higher as an epistolary writer, than a writer of novels.

Mr. Winterdale is gone to London, to be present at, what I hope will be, the final hearing of the Montgomery cause. He had the kindness to shake my hand before he went, and assure me of his good wishes; though he believed he had no services to offer. Sir James is in town, on the same business. Montgomery is at Worcester, with a part of the regiment to which he belongs.

Eleanor's wedding cloaths are arrived. They are like herself, simple and elegant. The ceremony is to be performed on Mr. Winterdale's

return. I have undertaken to be bridesmaid; but not the value of one shilling will I purchase, or accept, on the occasion. It is as decent to rejoice in new white sattin, as it is to mourn in crape and bombazine; but these things are not from the heart. I shall participate in my cousin's prospect of felicity, as truly, in habits which I have worn before; and I cannot afford any new symbols of happiness.

I am prepared to undergo my exile with firmness. How many persons have voluntarily banished themselves from society: and shall I not yield to duty? I may say necessity; for duty is necessity.

There was a lady in London, an aunt of the celebrated John Wilkes, who having met with a disappointment in love, in her early youth,

whether from the death or infidelity of its object, I now forget, vowed never more to see the sun. She shut herself up in her bedchamber, which she did not quit, till she was carried out in her coffin. A lady, a friend of ours, who is now about sixty years of age, was once admitted into her apartment, when a child, owing to the nursery maid who attended her being a relation of the people with whom Mrs. Wilkes lodged. She perfectly remembers seeing her; in a light, drab-coloured camblet manteau, with cuffs and robings of crimson sattin; the exact model of the dress she wore at the time of her misfortune; the fashion and colour of which she never changed. She had then been confined about thirty years. She had a fire in her room, night and day, summer and winter, and would sometimes remain in her bed for two or three days toge-

ther. But there is some reason to believe she cast a longing, lingering, oo k upon the world she had quitted; for, her windows being towards the park, she had an awning made to them, that, while it excluded the heavens, gave her an opportunity to see the earth; and she frequently amused herself with looking at those who were walking along it. Mr. Wilkes often visited his aunt, and shewed her great respect.

There seems something singular in the ladies of Mr. Wilkes's family. I have heard of a sister of his at Bath, who ran into the opposite extreme. As the former lady never breathed the outward air; so this never breathed without it. She lived and slept with her windows open, throughout the year; and those persons who did not chuse to submit to the inconvenience

of the rain and snow, driving into her drawing room, chose not to visit her in rain or snow.

There is an instance of self imprisonment in our neighbourhood; less rigorous than that of Mrs. Wilkes; but more extraordinary for its motive.

A lady and her brother lived together in great harmony; both young, and both unmarried. The brother died; and such was the sister's sorrow, though she inherited his fortune, that, without a vow, it brought on a habit of staying at home. In summer she sometimes gets into her carriage, for an airing; but never steps out of it; except at her own door. In winter she is immoveable as a dormouse. She folds herself up in a wide, loose, wrapper, the emblem of ancient days, and never quits her fire-side, but to her bed.

This lady is about sixty years of age

In summer she admits a few old friends, of which number Mrs. Elrington is one. In September, before Mrs. Lillimore's winter set in, Mrs. Elrington took Eleanor and myself with her, one morning, to Brookford Hall, a fine old mansion, which is the residence of that lady. We drove along an avenue, in tolerable preservation; and entered a spacious hall that reminded me of the small armoury at the tower. Fowling pieces and pistols, of every description, and in great numbers, with here and there a sword; all perfectly bright, and in the nicest order, were disposed along the walls, in different forms of stars and crosses. Struck with astonishment, I whispered to Mrs. Elrington, "What unaccount-"able decorations for the house of a "single gentlewoman." That lady informed me that they had all belonged

to Mrs. Lillimore's brother; that immediately after his death they had been placed as I saw them, by order of his sister, who still took great delight in contemplating them, in her summer excursions into her hall; and that an atom of dust suffered to rest upon any one of them would be a crime; but a spot of rust, unpardonable.

We found Mrs. Lillimore seated in a large parlour, wainscotted with dark brown oak; and dressed in a thick silk, nearly of the same colour; with a white muslin apron. She received Mrs. Elrington with great cordiality; and Eleanor and me with good breeding; though with some timidity. Her countenance was expressive of mildness, tinctured with melancholy. There was nothing particularly interesting in the conversation of this recluse; and

Mrs. Elrington, apprehensive that the company of strangers would not be long agreeable, asked us, if we should not like to see the gardens.

Mrs. Lillimore described the way, and suffered us to go without a guide.

We observed servants peeping at us from different stations, with a jealous eye; and it was not without reason they did so; for to make themselves amends for their attention to the armoury, which was under the eye of their mistress; they totally neglected the grounds, which she did not see. I never beheld an inhabited place so complete a ruin. The situation is low; and presented us with fish ponds, covered with stagnant green; seats mouldered into fire wood; grass plats, overgrown with brambles; and walks, of which the foundation was gravel, and all the outward and visible parts

long, tall weeds, that our feet could scarcely find their way through.

I cannot be in so deplorable a state as these half animated beings who have suffered sorrow to swallow up, not only enjoyment, but hope. I *can* range the fields and climb the mountains. I *shall* employ my hands; which will, in some measure, divert my thoughts. And I *may* cherish a distant hope, if the inconstancy of man do not destroy it, that, at some distant period, I may yet be the wife of him I love.

Such are the consolatory prospects of

Your

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

LETTER LIX.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Winterdale, Dec. 14, 1812.

GIVE me joy, my dear Harriet. The world is mine! Montgomery is mine! In a word, the Montgomery estate is mine! I tread on air. Eleanor stands at my elbow, and says it is almost twelve o'clock, and time to go to sleep. Sleep! Eleanor, I disdain so common, so mean, a blessing! People that are between happiness and misery may sleep; I do not know that I shall sleep any more! Be not afraid, however, that my joy should prove stronger than my reason; only have the goodness to allow it to run over to you, that I may be enabled

to carry my cup steady to every body else.

Never shall I forget the lesson my folly and my fears have taught me. I have read of some wise and virtuous man, who, being raised from poverty to a high station, preserved his humble habits to remind him of his origin. So will I treasure up, in my imagination, the gown of woollen I had cut out for myself. If ever my thoughts out-run the sober pace of propriety and prudence, I will look at the picture I have often drawn, of Charlotte Montgomery, sitting under a lowly thatch, and knitting her own stockings. The transition appears wonderful; almost incredible—but it is time to tell you how it came to pass.

When Mr. Winterdale arrived in London he consulted Mr. Mountney, and was confirmed in the opinion that

he, and every other person, had long entertained, that the decree of the Lord Chancellor must, inevitably be against me. He then ordered all the title deeds of the family to be conveyed to his lodgings; and, attended by Mr. Mountney, he examined them, one by one, with the greatest care. Nothing appeared, to support my pretensions. His cautious and penetrating eye then measured the height of the large iron chest, in which they had been deposited, and compared it with the depth within. He observed a considerable difference. He sounded the bottom; it was hollow. He surveyed the ends; and found, at one of them, a division of the iron, scarcely perceptible, which indicated a drawer. Aided, perhaps, by experience, he pressed against the opposite end, till he touched a spring; when the draw-

er flew open. I can hardly breath e while I tell you that this contained my fate. In this, among other parchments of consequence, was found an indisputable document in my favour; besides several leathern bags of good old guineas; which, by the dates, appear to have been the hoard of my grandfather, and to have slept a generation for me.

I feel myself almost in the situation of the prodigal, who, having spent his substance, found the mandate of his deceased father to go and hang himself; and, in obeying it, fell to the ground, amidst a shower of gold.

This eventful writing was produced at the trial, with the chest in which it had been found. At a proof so positive, and so unexpected, Sir James Montgomery turned pale; his counsel threw down their briefs; and my right-

ful inheritance was adjudged to be mine.

What do I owe to Mr. Winterdale, whose indefatigable industry, and piercing sagacity have recovered my fortune from the recesses of the grave in which it lay buried! But this is not all. He has brought me the bonds I had given to the Jews; and I have seen them devoured by the flames. No memorial now remains of my folly, but in my heart; from whence it will never be obliterated. He has taken up the bonds by checks upon his banker, put my grandfather's gold into his coffers; and the remainder of the sum is to be paid when I am at age. As I want but four months of that period, I shall not be long in his debt; and as the savings of my minority, which are immense, will then be undoubtedly

mine, I shall redeem the estate from mortage, and still be rich.

Mr. Winterdale having rendered me these services, left Mendall to transact some business in town; stepped into the mail coach; and was the bearer of the joyful tidings himself. When he told them, I burst into tears; threw my arms about his neck, and kissed him. We have had one battle, however; but I have conquered; as I was determined to do. I insisted upon repaying him all the debts contracted by Lady Montgomery, during her widowhood. He resisted it long, and very sincerely; but as I was convinced that justice demanded it, I was not to be drawn or driven from my purpose; and, at last, he yielded.

Now, what a glorious revenge will I take on that Sir James Montgomery,

who threatened to let his son go to prison for my debts, while he, himself, enjoyed my fortune! I will be revenged by making him a respectful daughter, and his son an affectionate wife. I will bring that estate into his family, of which he would not allow me a share; and he shall own, if possible, that *a sinner who repenteth*, is as acceptable as *a just person, who needeth no repentance.*

As the father of my beloved husband I will respect Sir James; but my christian creed will not compel me to love the man who could endeavour to crush a helpless young woman, already beaten down by misfortune. I must, however do Sir James the justice to acknowledge that he appeared moved at my distress, and pleased with my firmness.

What an omnipotent agent is money!

How little did I know its power, when I thoughtlessly squandered it on dress and amusements! To say nothing of the blessings it will enable me to bestow on others, what blessings has it conferred upon myself! From a destined outcast of society, I command the hand of the man I love. Instead of taking advantage of his generosity, at the risque of his father's renunciation, and his own personal safety; I evince my own, by forgetting prejudice, and forgiving animosity. Instead of following my husband, with a downcast eye, into the presence of his offended father; hearing him implore pardon, as if he had committed a fault; and become responsible for me, as if I were expected to commit more; I shall enter, hand in hand; and be presented as the bride, who has selected him from among a thou-

sand, and brought a solid estate to an empty title.

Do not regard this as silly boasting; or imagine I shall be weak enough to betray any symptoms of purse-proud vanity. I value my fortune only as it procures me things I value still higher; and the first of these, that which gives importance to all the rest, is Montgomery. I can repeat the second verse of a song, of which I once, in jest, gave you the first.

> But when his worth my hand shall gain,
> No word, or look of mine shall shew,
> That I the smallest thought retain,
> Of what my bounty did bestow.

Bounty, however, is too poor a word. I wish Sheridan had said,

> Of what affection did bestow.

Another blessing which I owe to money is the wiping off part of the

stain of my mother's disingenuous conduct towards Mr. Winterdale, before her marriage. As far as money can do it, that pleasure is mine. Her husband has no longer sustained a loss. What more can be done towards taking away the reproach depends upon his lady, in future.

If ever I have children, my dear Harriet, among the first lessons I teach them shall be those of economy. I will have engraven at the beginning of every one of their books. *Save where you may, that you may be able to spend and give where you ought.* For want of such a lesson, what is my mother? A beautiful superstructure, without a foundation: a tree, bearing lovely flowers, and delicious fruit; but nodding and bending with every blast: a woman, with a good understanding, a happy temper, and irresistible man-

ners; yielding, without reflection, to every idle and expensive gratification. And what might I have been, under such tuition, if love and misfortune had not taught me to think for myself!

I have written till I have *soberized* my senses; and my eye-lids court that *knitter up of the ravelled sleeve of care*, which I wantonly despised at the beginning of my letter. If now my fancy present me with the images of great perriwigs, they will be eclipsed by that of my lover.

Ever Yours,

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

LETTER LX.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

Winterdale, Dec. 17, 1812.

MY DEAR HARRIET,

MONTGOMERY travelled from Worcester, on the wings of love and expectation; and entered our breakfast room the morning after I wrote to you last. Fortunately I was next the door; or I cannot say what mischief might have ensued; or whether tea or coffee; cups or saucers; or all together; might have been the victims of my haste. How I got there God only knows, so you will not require an explanation from me; but, certain it is, I found myself in his arms, and felt him press me to his bosom.

If such unmaidenly proceeding

shock your delicacy, I will not enter upon my own defence: in the first place, because I have not time; in the second, because I am not sure that it is defensible. But I must say, I should feel more reluctance to let fall my head on my lover's shoulder, or his bosom, in the most delightful of all arbours; or by the light of the most heavenly of all moons; as many very modest young ladies in novels have done; than to give him, in the face of my whole family, such an unpremeditated testimony of my joy at meeting him; after a separation, which, though short, might probably have been eternal. We were both sensible, however, that this unequivocal expression of our happiness was not quite decorous; and I took my seat with some confusion.

Montgomery paid his respects to all

the party in silence. My mother was the first who broke it, by saying, " I " am a witness of your claim to my " daughter; and, I believe, it will not, " this time, be made in vain. Char- " lotte will grant that to a poor soldier, " which she refused to the presump- " tive heir of the Montgomery estate."

" I doubt it not," replied Montgo- mery. " To owe affluence to my " Charlotte is a trifle, after having been " so happy as to obtain her heart."

" That trifle will now, fortunately, " accompany the more important gift, " which it has long been out of my " power to withhold," said I: " and " here, in the presence of my mother " and cousin, the former evidences of " your claim; and of Mr. Winter- " dale and his son, whom I regard as " my father and brother; do I recog- " nize your title to both."

I presented my hand to Montgomery. The tear glistened in his eye. He pressed my hand to his lips in silence; and, after some moments, said with great emotion. "I cannot thank you "for such goodness. It shall be the "study of my life to deserve it, though "I can never hope to succeed."

"You young men," said Mr. Winterdale, "are very dextrous carvers of "your own happiness. Because the "sun shines you think it will always "be day."

"Can I doubt my happiness with "Miss Montgomery, Sir?" demanded my namesake.

"No, certainly," replied Mr. Winterdale. "I never doubted my happi-"ness with her mother—till after she "was my wife. Then, indeed, I "found the sweets would not cloy, for "want of a due proportion of bitters."

" You, yourself, consider my mar-
" riage with Miss Mowbray as the
" means to secure my happiness," said Henry to his father.

" You have heard of your old Aunt
" Deborah, the greatest match-maker
" in the county. She was miserable in
" marriage herself, and thought every
" person ought to marry, that he might
" not escape his share of vexation.
" However, as each must have his
" share, I do think that Montgomery's
" and yours stand a chance to be small.
" Charlotte is a noble girl; and our
" pretty, blushing Eleanor, there, is
" sweet-tempered and prudent. Per-
" haps, you may both be as happy as
" it is right for man to be in this world.
" My future daughter-in-law," added
" Mr. Winterdale, addressing him-
" self to Montgomery, " is to be mar-
" ried immediately. I suppose you

" would not forgive me, if I were to
" persuade her friend to become a wife,
" at the same time?"

" I could not find words to express
" my gratitude, Sir."

" Then remain dumb, while I try.
" What say you, my good girl?" continued Mr. Winterdale, turning to me.
" Do you think I can prevail?"

" I am afraid I shall not be able to
" deny you, Sir," answered I; " or
" even to make a merit of my compli-
" ance, by pretending that it is in re-
" turn for the favours you have heaped
" upon me. To marry, or not to
" marry, is, indeed, an important
" question; but, that once determined,
" a few weeks more or less, in the
" time, make little difference. I have
" always considered the delicacy of
" young ladies, on that subject, as
" a piece of despicable affectation; or,

" to put the best construction on it,
" pitiable irresolution. That it is an
" aweful thing to pronounce an irre-
" vocable vow is without a doubt;
" and that I shall be terribly frightened
" is as certain: but if I were to
" think of it for a twelve-month, it
" would not be less aweful, or I less
" afraid."

" I knew you were above affec-
" tation, Charlotte," said Mr. Win-
terdale. " I despise your young ladies,
" who having spread their nets abroad,
" to catch fellows, and having en-
" tangled one past hope of escape,
" draw back, and simper, and hesi-
" tate to name the day; as if it were
" the greatest condescension. I can-
" not charge Lady Winterdale with
" that grimace, however."

" But," said my mother, " I do not
" see how Miss Montgomery can pos-

" sibly be married immediately. The " consent of her guardians is neces- " sary."

" I will take that upon myself," said Mr. Winterdale.

" Besides," resumed my mother, " she cannot do without jewels, cloaths, " and equipage."

" I will take upon myself to answer " that, said I; for I can do without " them all."

" But," said my mother, " you can " not do without a house; and that " celebrated old castle of yours is not " to be dressed out for your recep- " tion at a day's notice."

" If I might presume to obviate " that difficulty," said Montgomery, " I should propose our going to Lon- " don, immediately after the cere- " mony. My father and mother are " there; and I should be anxious to

" present my lovely bride to them, if
" she had no objection."

" It would be my wish, as well as
" yours," replied I.

" Thanks were poor," said Montgomery. " My life shall thank you.
" —But there is another circum-
" stance which cannot easily be got
" over," added he, addressing himself to Mr. Winterdale; " unless you would
" have the kindness to undertake it,
" Sir; I mean settlements."

This was exactly in Mr. Winterdale's way. " That shall be my province," replied he. " I will send for
" my solicitor directly, and we will
" consult him on the subject." He rang the bell instantly, and ordered a messenger to be dispatched for Mr. Liberal.

I observed Eleanor whisper Henry; who, as soon as his father was seated,

said, " I hope, Sir, you could have no " objection to our going to London, " with Mr. Montgomery and his " bride."

" I do not know that I could," replied his father. " I believe your " Eleanor may be trusted, even in " that sink of iniquity; but I advise " you not to keep her there above a " month."

" Oh Mr. Winterdale!" cried my mother, " I must go to London! It is " not in human nature to stay at " home! Only figure to yourself you " and I left alone in this dreary old " mansion; the sensible Henry, the " affectionate Eleanor, the sprightly " Charlotte, all gone. What would be- " come of us? You would not have pa- " tience to let me beat you at back- " gammon. We should be reduced " to a game at all-fours; and when

" we were both heartily weary, which
" would soon be the case, you would
" take your chair on that side the fire;
" and I should place myself on this.
" You would stretch up both your
" arms, and say, I wonder where Henry
" and Eleanor are now! I should yawn,
" and answer, I wish to God I knew;
" for then I should be with them. You
" would take out your watch, and say,
" it is but half past nine o' clock! A
" long while after, I should look at
" mine, and say, It wants a quarter of
" ten, yet! We should then wait with
" a mixture of weariness and impa-
" tience, till the great stable clock
" told ten; when I should ring the
" bell, and retire to rest after the fa-
" tigues of the day. You see it would
" not be possible to drag out such a
" deplorable existence. I must abso-
" lutely go to London, sha'n't I?"

"Now," said Mr. Winterdale, "you "have learned the proper language of "a wife—I will; shall I? You should "certainly go to town upon such an "occasion; but that you are made of "a sort of stuff that will spoil by being "there."

"Try me," said his lady. "Impose "upon me any restrictions you please."

"In the first place, then, I will go "with you."

"That would be my own choice. "I appeal to yourself, if ever I have "wished to go any where without you, "since I became your wife."

"So far is good. You have not. "Secondly, you shall go to my old "lodgings, near the Strand."

"Near the Strand!" repeated my mother. "What can induce you to "pitch upon such a situation as that?"

"Habit," answered Mr. Winterdale.

"Then habit will soon reconcile you "to a place near one of the squares."

"No. I find the neighbourhood of "the Strand agree with some of my "other habits; and I shall not change "it."

"But I should be shocked to death "if any creature one knew should find "one out, in such a situation."

"That is one of my reasons for pre- "ferring it; for my next condition "is, that you shall not associate with "any of the creatures you know."

"Nay," said my mother, "if you "take me to the Strand, your last con- "dition is quite unnecessary; for I "would pop my head into the first "hackney coach I met with, sooner "than any of them should see my own "carriage set me down at home.—But "you cannot be in earnest, surely!"

"Yes; if your ladyship will agree
"to these things, and give me your
"solemn promise to observe them, I
"think I am in earnest; and will ven-
"ture to take you to London for a
"month or six weeks."

"And you absolutely will burrow
"near the Strand?

"Take the Strand, or a game at
"all-fours, which you please."

"In such an alternative I take the
"Strand; but I am really afraid such
"a foggy air will damp my spirits and
"sour my temper. However, I will
"do my best to escape from it. I'll
"drive about all morning, and light
"candles as soon as I come home.
"But pray what are you to do with
"Charlotte and Eleanor, and their
"spouses? Are they to take one step
"more, to the bottom of the Thames;
"or are they to chuse a local habita-
"tion for themselves?"

"There can only be a difference of "opinion on one point between your "ladyship and my father," said Henry.

"You may wish to enter into your "former habits of living; he to pre- "vent it. If upon looking into your "own mind, your ladyship can sacri- "fice these, there can be no objection "to our taking a suitable house, and "all living together, during the time "we are in town."

"Will you be responsible for me, "Henry?" said my mother.

"If your ladyship bids me, I will," answered Henry.

"I do then; and you shall not re- "pent your confidence. Mr. Winter- "dale, you will not object to my "surety?"

"No. I will trust him now, and "you another time; provided you do "not disgrace your bondsman. But

" you must subscribe to one more ar-
" ticle."

" Name it."

" Never to lay out more money than
" you have in your pocket."

" That is a more barbarous prohi-
" bition than the other; but, as I hope
" you will always keep my pocket full
" of money, I promise."

" As you keep your present resolu-
" tions, I shall know how to rely upon
" you in future."

" Amen," said my mother. " You
" see, Charlotte, what you must come
" to, if you wed. Your husband can
" take you an airing to Greenland; and
" deny you money to buy a fur tippet;
" and if you love him, as I do, you
" can only make a bow and say, just as
" you please, Sir."

Mr. Winterdale then asked me if I would trust him with the arrangement

of my affairs. I answered, that they could no where be in so good hands; and his trouble would merit my warmest thanks. He left the room, to amuse himself with drawing up instructions for Mr. Liberal; telling Montgomery he should expect him to join them, on that gentleman's arrival. My mother retired to give instructions to Mrs. Horton, on a business of little less consequence, in her imagination; the preparations for her journey to London. And Henry and Eleanor went out to walk, without once asking Montgomery or me to accompany them.

In the course of my country correspondence, many are the trifling conversations I have related to you; and my only apology for so doing is the hope that they may have contained something of character, and not been wholly destitute of moral. I shall not

now trouble you with what passed between Montgomery and myself; which, though one of the most interesting to the parties concerned, would, probably, be one of the least so to you. It is sufficient to say that it was serious and tender. Our past sufferings and apprehensions, the present happy moment, and our future endearing and domestic prospects, passed in review before us; and the result was gratitude to the Supreme Disposer of events.

You will not hear again at present from

Your

CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY.

LETTER LXI.

TO MR. MENDALL, LONDON.

Winterdale, Dec. 19, 1812.

DERE MUSTER MENDALL,

I TAKES this hopperchunity of sending these few lines to ashure you of my sensere good will and affections; thogh god he knos I be so bissy that I dos not kno wich away to turn myself: and if I had as manny eyes as Mr. Hardgrass, and as manny hands as Mr. Briers, and all them theer genttlemen that Master Henry yoused to tawk on, in the time of is vocashon, when he comed from scule, I am foolly purswasive that I cold nither see ater every think, nor doo every think miself; tho I am shure I necklecks nothink as ever lys in my pour.

To be shure I has a hole happern ful o news to tell you, thogh you knos the best part on it beer foor and; becase why? you knos as hour young lady have got her shoot, god bles hur; and now hurs a great hair ass of ten thowsund a yere; and mutch good may doo hur, says I; for hurs never a bitt the prowder; but speaks has kindly to boddy as ever hur did afore. And now I am a gooing to tell you whot you does not know; for that kunning chap, yong squire Muntgumry rod all night from Uster, as sune a evver he knowd it, and comed, slap, dash, to mack shure on hur. I did hear say that he wold not have hur, when hur was pure; but he knos a wich side is bred be butterd on, and now he have snapped hur up. Howsever, hes a good gentleman, and be haves himself like a gentleman to wee sarvants; for

manys the good hafe crown I has had of his mony; so god bles um boath together. And when hurd gin consent, master tuck matters in hand; and you knos he is not one as do things by haves; and he said as they shold be marrid imegteley, to kuer them o their hops and feers; and my lady said as how theer must be grate pepperashons o necklisses and sich like; but my young lady said as how hur wold be marrid, nolus, volus, if hur had not a rag to her back. And who cold say miss she did? Not I, by my truly; for I shold doo as much miself, if I had fixed my mind upon ever a yong man, and he shold ax me the queshton; thogh I must needs say I shold bring him sumthink hansum beside; but that is nyther hear nor thear. And master have settled every think for next tusdy as ever the lord shall send us; so

you may think what I has to doo. But I has not told you hall; for Mr. Henry is to have miss Mowberry at the same time, and thay be hall to goo to lundon together. And then my lady said as hur shold drap down ston dead o the maygrums, if hur was to be laft all alone by herself with master; so, betwixt one and another, thay has noodled him into the jurney.

But the surprisingist circumstanshall of all is that I be to goo allong withum. Misis horton and Missis Robison and me be all three to go in a poshays, and you may beleeve that my poor hed turns round like a hotum poney. To be shure I has bin offens at hour town, and manny be the housen that be in it; but by what I can larn, it is no more compairable to lundon, nor farmer jennings pigsty to hour grand hall. I be paking up my clos, and trying to

think of evry think, that I may forget nothink; and I has got missis robison to mack me up a smart cap, or too; and, I ashure you I has not spared nyther lace nor ribbin; and I has boght me a wite gownd; and miss doubledoo has sot up all night to make it. Missis horton said as how I mit get it mad at lundon; but I knod better nor that; for I wold not let the lunon fokes think as I was beholding to them for a good gownd; but I wold show um my sittiashon cold aford me one at wom. If I thinks fitting to bye me another, whan I be theer, well and good; and if I can discovery anny smart yong parson as can make it, why, praps I may.

I thinks the verry deel be got ammong us; for I does beleef that fool Rafe, will marry jinney! the wench had the imporance to tell me

too my face, the tother day, that hur did not valley hur plase; for hurd the ring in her pockkit! If hur does goo, I hops the lord will send us a better, if her binot quit so handsum; and if ever good fortin nocks at my door, I shanot stand in my own light, and say it nay.

And so master be writing to give you ordures to provisson a come odourous house for us all, agen next thirsdy; and so you need not tack no notiss as I menchond it to you. But I begs you will not foreget a pritty snug rum for me, were us may all dine conveniable, and you and me may have a socionable bit of chatt, when misis horton and misis robbinson be attenshoning the ladys. And as you be privy legged in lundon, I shall take it kindley on you, if you will show me the lyons, and the monnyments, and Wess Mister Hall, and the grate guns

of Scent Palls and the Pallis. And in return for all favers, I will mend your stokings, and cut you the plum side of the pudden, and the brown of the rost mete; and do anny think els as evver lys in my pour, for you. Pleas to be so good as to ordur the beds to be well haired, and fire pot in all the rums, from dere Mister Mendall,

Your affactionat frand,

MARTHA STABLE

LETTER LXII.

TO MUSTER WILYAM MENDAL.

Winterdel, dissembur 1812.

DERE SUR,

THIS cums uth mi dooty to yo, and to let yo to no how us be gooin on at this plas, beein as how misis stable be gooin to Lunon to morrer, and ool pot it in hur bocks, uf all hur fine flim flams ool gif hur lefe; for hur do tak a wacking passil o trinkelments suer enof. Wen mastr cum bak frum lunon and brot the gud neus o hour yung lady gettin hur own fortin, dad! I thot us shud a bin jompin owt in our skins for jy. And mastr sent owt too bottels o wind, into misis Stables rum; and hur acksit me inn to drinck mis mundgumberys yelth uth the ladys;

and maddam horton drunck till hur fase was utha sun shyn; and most an eend yo nos it be bot clowdyish. And necks mawrnin, by brecksfirst, who shud pop is nose in bot squir mundgumbry, who galupped throo thick and thin; and I do sy his nose be a gud un; for hee cud smel ten thowsun of ear as for off as Ooster. Howsumdevr he nidna a bin so duberus; for owr swete yung lady was tru hartid, o spite o all is old fathurs figarys and suspichons; for missis Horton lyde hur hear to the dooer, has yo nos she doo, now and tan; and hur syde as miss didna sty to be acksit twise; for hur hood hav im that blesid minnit; and mastr sed thy shud all be morrid togithur, to save time; and muster Henry sad thy hooden go to lunon citty: an mi lady sad as hur shud brake hur hart o mollycolly, uf hur

styd at wom, to ply at cards uth mastr; and so thy be all a gooin.

And now do cum the best of all; for I has gee consent to morry jinney. The bagitch canted me up to by the ring, som time agon; and as morryin be the fasshon, why I wunnat be owt in it. I shud ha sot my mind uppon gooin to lunnon, as well as othar foks; uf it hodna bin for a thing or too; an won is I remembrs aberristy; and I shud ha bin affeard o the sharpurs and swinglurs, and monny drappers, as run ravenin abot them theer bigg streets; for it binna onlikly as how thy mut ha bin too manny for me. Annother thing is as I shal be laft e the powr of evry think at wom; for wan yo be gon an mastr be gon, hoo but me mun rule the roste? and anothar thing is I shal be hackst o chorch and be morried;

and so I hops it be all for the best, blesid by god for it

And wan I had ficksit my mind I gos into the stoody to mastr, to let him to no; for tho I be a fre born inglichmon, and can morry an hacks no leaf, yit I thot it hood be bot kind, lik, to gee him an inkling about the mattur; so I maks won o my bettermust boughs, and I hordly nod how to bring it owt; an I sad, cur, sas I, I hops yo unna tak it a mis; but I has a bit of a mind o jinney hous made. You dunna no wot yo be dooin, sas he; yo ool hav yor wig pooled. Cur, sas I, hur mun pool pratty hord to get it; for it grows to my yed. Why how can yo mintane a wif an a passill o bratts, sas he. The brats mun com in gods own time, sais I; and I honna sarvd yor honner so lung but I has

larned som o yor wys. I be wurth a gudish bit o monny; but, to be suer, it binna enof to kip me; but I has got a stowt pare o horms, and I mun ly my boons to wurk. Well, sas mastr uf yo han a mind to ply the fool, I shonna hinder yo. And so he do sy us shall have a bit o ground for a kow, and a litel hous to live in, and I shal be grum e time to come; and so god bles him sy I; for I shall gett my wif and my purfarmint at the sam time; an won mun help to kip the tuther.

But my yed runs so o my hone afares, that I has forgot to tell yo as arter squir mundgumbery comd, I wus sent, as fast as hoss cud cary me, for mister libell, to mak the porchmuns as wor to bind um togather: and mastr he rot up to our yung lady's car johns at lunon. I dos supose thy be too gentlemen o the name o john, as be in

care for her, and so thy be calld care johns; for I binna sartin as I spells the wurds quit rite; tho yo nos as I be tollable cute, and spels pratty parfit, kunsidering. And so all be reddy; the nams be to the porchmans; the car-johns has gee consent; and the rings and the lye sensis bin bot. To morer mornin parsin thaker do his wurk, wich ool be a bettr job nor the last he have had frum the hall; and ater brecs-furst my mastr and my lady, and skuire mundgumperry and is lady, gos in hour carrig; and muster Henry and his lady in a shease; and misis horton, and misis robbyson, and misis stable, and too banging troncks in anothur; and a sinfull looade thy ool be. And I gos tuelv miles to dyne ooth um hall, an than I coms bake, an robbud gos-on. And god send me the grease to kip myself sober; for thar ool be so

monny gud yelths to drink, that I do no as wind ool ron abot lik dych watter.

I has bin a riteing this pissel at bits and bobs, jest has I cud gitt time; for the minnitt I has anserred mastrs bell, in coms missis stable, or som otther o the ladys, to hacks me to quord a bocks, or tigh up a bundhill; for yo nos I be jack of all treads. And so, as mississ horton do sy, ovur her drinck, my the singhell be morrid, and the morrid be hapy; wich is hall at prisont frum

Yors to com and

RALPH RUSSETTING.

LETTER LXIII.

TO MISS CASTLEMAIN.

London, Jan. 21, 1813.

MY DEAR HARRIET.

It is one among the many privileges of a married woman to neglect the friends of her maiden days; and I have availed myself of this, my matronly prerogative, with regard to you. I have been a month in town, without taking up my pen. I chose to be enured to the weight of the new dignity that has fallen upon my shoulders, before I ventured to address you under it.

Mr. Winterdale, as I informed you in my last, had undertaken to procure the consent of my guardians, and the

completion of the writings; and it is scarcely necessary to add that both were soon expedited.

The following Tuesday was the day fixed upon by Mr. Winterdale for the celebration of the two marriages. When it arrived, he said to his son, "On this happy day, Henry, I will make you a present of my animosity to Thacker. You may ask the scoundrel to breakfast. Neither you or your religion can require me to esteem him; and, if either did, it would be out of my power; but it is hardly decent to live at daggers drawing with the parson of my parish, and I will make him forget at your wedding the affront I offered him at my own."

Henry thanked his father. When the ceremony was over, Mr. Thacker accompanied us to the hall; and Mr. Winterdale treated him with the respect due

to his station. I am sorry to say that this sudden change was almost too much for the weak head of the vicar, and that hatred gave way to a kind of servility which was not to the credit either of his heart or understanding.

The morning after our arrival in town, Mr. Montgomery—here I find myself obliged to make a digression—young women, in the gaiety of their hearts, may be permitted to speak of their flatterers and adorers by their surnames, only; but I have ever considered it as a want of propriety, if not of decency, in a married woman thus to designate her husband; I have made Montgomery my lord and master; and he is Mr. Montgomery with me, till a higher title shall descend to him. Now to proceed.

The morning after our arrival in town, Mr. Montgomery waited upon

his father and mother. It is to be presumed that he found no difficulty in obtaining leave to introduce his bride. He soon returned; I was prepared for the interview; and stepped into Mr. Winterdale's carriage immediately. As I drew near the house I trembled; and could not conceal my agitation from Mr. Montgomery. I found my fortune could not support me, in my introduction to this aweful father of my husband. What then must have been my feelings had I entered his presence under his frightful denunciations, a beggar, and a tax upon his estate! I should have sunk under the load.

Mr. Montgomery soothed me; and, without reverting to the fortune, which, though justly, was only accidentally mine, he insisted upon my various merits, and the impression they had

already made upon Sir James. The coach stopped; we entered the house; my husband led me up stairs; a door was opened; and I stood motionless, except the tremulous motion of my whole frame, before this terrific father. He took my hand and saluted me; but did not speak.

Lady Montgomery received me with open arms; and congratulated herself upon the acquisition of such a daughter. Her son led me to a seat, of which I stood sufficiently in need; and a seasonable shower of tears came to my relief. I then perceived, what I had not been able to notice before, that Sir James's silence was accounted for by his emotion, which almost equalled my own, though it was not demonstrated in such a feminine manner. When he recovered himself, he addressed me, saying, "I have to thank you, Madam,

for the honour you have done us; but when I reflect upon the manner in which I last conversed with you, I am at a loss how to do it as I ought."

"It would spare us both a painful recollection, Sir," replied I, "if what passed at our last meeting were forgotten on both sides, and from this moment never mentioned more."

"I cannot consent to that," rejoined Sir James. "An explanation of my conduct, and an apology for it are both necessary."

"If then you would have the goodness to express your thoughts on the subject now, Sir," said I, "I should be very happy to dismiss it for ever."

"Perhaps," said Sir James, "I ought to say something in justification of my endeavouring to wrest from you what now appears to have been your right. I can only say that it appeared

to me, and every professional man I consulted, to be mine; and an accidental discovery, unsuspected by any one, has been the sole cause of proving it otherwise. My son has urged against me the barbarity of stripping an unprotected young woman of what had been considered as her inheritance. This was an appeal to my generosity, not justice; and it appeared to me too great a sacrifice to make to generosity. And who was to require it? A young woman who was herself dissipating the property in question, by dishonourable measures! The most reasonable charge that could be brought against me was resisting the obvious compromise of our different interests, by the union between you and my son; when Providence seemed to have brought you together, almost for that very purpose. I can truly aver, and I have

said it before, that, had you been only without a fortune, and without reproach, I would not have objected to it. But imagine yourself in my place for a moment, and say, would you have admitted into your family the daughter of——I had almost said, an unprincipled woman; and knowing that daughter had inherited, or imbibed the character of her mother so far, as to have borrowed considerable sums of usurers, at the age of nineteen ?"

"I certainly would not, Sir," replied I, "if I had conceived my authority was such as ought to controul the free choice of my son. Mr. Montgomery knows I always did expect an objection to his wishes, on your part, whenever you should be informed of my past conduct."

"It was in vain," continued Sir

James, "that my son represented your altered sentiments and habits, when I considered that the newly adopted sentiments and habits were imposed by necessity, not conviction."

"Pardon me, Sir," said I, interrupting Sir James. "I own they were imposed by necessity; but that, aided by my attachment to Mr. Montgomery, brought conviction along with it."

"I did not then reason like a young woman," replied Sir James; "or even like a passionate lover. But I come now to what passed between you and myself at Aberystwith. You are aware that our meeting there was accidental; and that if I could have suspected into what company chance was throwing me, I would have avoided it, at every peril. My proposal, therefore was not

premeditated. In fact it was occasioned by the despicable boasts and falsehoods of servants, which I rendered myself more despicable than they by listening to. In my bitterness against what I imagined levity and coquetry, I even thought it a generous action to discharge your debts, on the trifling consideration, trifling as I believed it would be to you, of detaching you from my son. The noble firmness with which you refused my offer; the exquisite sensibility you manifested in your fears for Mr. Montgomery; and your candour in acknowledging your own errors; soon shewed me I had mistaken your character; and I left the room abruptly, lest I should betray my feelings."

"I intreat, Sir," said I, with great earnestness, "that the matter may rest here. All you have been relating

is perfectly natural and consistent; and it shall be my future study to deserve those sentiments of esteem, I was then so fortunate as to obtain."

"This is a subject so ungrateful to myself," resumed Sir James, "that I shall gladly acquiesce in your wish to mention it no more; but I cannot quit it now, without adverting to another circumstance, which I perceive your delicacy wishes to bury in oblivion. What you have heard you can approve; and you would be spared a repetition of what your ingenuous mind must condemn. How shall I express my opinion of the threat I dared to utter? It was unworthy! it was unmanly! it was base! and, here, I most sincerely ask your forgiveness."

Sir James's voice failed him. I rose from my seat with precipitation; and, holding out my hand, which he took,

"This is too much, Sir," said I, "I own that threat distressed me more than any thing I ever met with. I own it was the sole barrier which stood between my heart and the heart of Mr. Montgomery's father. I rejoice that you persisted in an explanation I would have given the world to avoid; as your condescension has effaced that cruel scene from my memory: or, if a trace of it should remain, it will be accompanied with the gratitude inspired by this moment."

"I hope," replied Sir James, "you will allow me to say, and the sincerity I have now used will induce you to believe, that it was only a threat; a contemptible trick to frighten you into my measures. I despise myself for having practised it; but I should abhor myself, if I were capable of intending to do what I denounced. It was what

law might have permitted; but what justice, decency, and humanity equally forbade."

"Dear Sir," said I, "cease to accuse yourself. Dreadful as such an idea was to my feelings, I never censured it in such harsh terms as you do now."

"One word more," added Sir James, "and I have done. It was my determination, from the time we parted at Aberystwith, never more to oppose the inclinations of my son; and if he had addressed me again on the subject; as, after a decree of Chancery in my favour, I expected he would; I should have left the disposal of his hand intirely to his own discretion."

"Enough, Sir; and more than enough," said I. "I believe you, as I hope to be believed myself. What an undeserving creature should I be,

if I, whose claim to your esteem must rest upon the future, were not willing to forget the past! To have gained your good opinion is the highest satisfaction to me now; and to preserve it will be one of the first pleasures, as well as duties, of my life."

During this conversation tears trickled down the cheeks of Lady Montgomery; and the countenance of her son denoted a fixed anxiety and attention. By degrees other topics were introduced, in which they bore a part; and by the time dinner was announced, every one was at ease; except Sir James, whose unsteady eye not daring to encounter mine, shewed he was still hurt at his former behaviour. I passed the whole day with them; my natural vivacity returned; and, stimulated by the desire of rendering myself agreeable to the father of my husband, I did

my best, and succeeded. Sir James, at last, wholly laid aside his reserve; and we parted pleased with each other.

How dear to me were the grateful acknowledgments of Mr. Montgomery, as we returned home! They would have made any sacrifice cheap; but they were the reward of following the bent of my own inclination.

"I knew it! I always said it!" cried he. "My Charlotte had only to "present herself, to win my father's "heart."

I have since passed much of my time with Sir James and Lady Montgomery, in a domestic way. Sir James is a man of sense and honour; though his manners are not very conciliating. To me, however, he unbends; and I give it as a secret between ourselves, Harriet, that these men of sense and honour love those to

whom they can unbend, and are very thankful for the pleasure it affords them.

Lady Montgomery has a good understanding and a mild disposition; and though there is no particular kindness in her husband's behaviour towards her, he appears sensible of the one, and does not presume upon the other. Her manner to me is truly maternal. I love her as the mother of Mr. Montgomery, and, almost, as my own.

Lady Winterdale has not broken through either of the restrictions imposed by her husband. She has sought no opportunity of meeting any of her former acquaintances; and, when chance has thrown them in her way, has avoided them. Her ductile mind seizes a family party to a play or an opera with the same avidity that it has heretofore grasped a grand gala which

has filled her house. She cannot weave her own entertainment; but, if it will come ready made to her hands, she contents herself; whether it be composed of elegant, or coarse materials; whether it be furnished by a fashionable Countess, or Mrs. Thacker.

The same easy temper which has steered my mother clear of dissipation, during the last month, has made it extremely difficult for her to escape unnecessary expenditure. London abounds with pretty things, which are coveted as soon as seen. A moment's reflection excites a real want; and she is persuaded that all she thinks desireable is indispensable. It is true she has not purchased a single article without paying for it; but her insatiable cravings after jewellery and ornaments, millinery and lace, have been a constant drain to Mr. Winterdale's purse. He

remonstrates; she argues, smiles, and prevails. She will run her course, till the exhausted patience of her husband throw a sudden and impenetrable barrier in her way.

How different is my cousin, the amiable wife of Henry! After pleasing her husband, her first wish is to please his father; and, sweetly tempered by nature, and moderate in all her desires, she has scarcely an effort to make, to accomplish it. When we attend my mother in her morning rambles; and India, France, and Great Britain display their rare and costly productions before us; Eleanor, to whom most of these things are new, admires with taste and discrimination; but, having selected what is proper and becoming, she is immoveable; and regards the rest as an exhibition, in which she has no interest, but that of

a spectator. Mr. Winterdale is delighted with her; and how should he be otherwise; when she conforms to his opinions, adopts his habits, and prevents his wishes, so naturally, that they all appear to be her own!

Mr. Montgomery has already quitted the army. We shall stay here another month; and then all return to Winterdale together. By the time I am at age, the castle of our ancestors will be ready for our reception; and my mother and Mr. Winterdale, Henry and Eleanor, have promised to accompany us, when we take possession of it.

On reviewing the events of the past year, the grand doctrine of *Whatever is is right*, seems almost as forcibly illustrated as in the tale of Parnell's Hermit. The improvement of my character was the result of my vexatious law-suit. My union with Mr.

Montgomery was the consequence of a ball, which I thought it imprudence to appear at. The esteem of Sir James for me was founded upon an unworthy experiment of his own. Let not man, however, presume to do wrong that right may follow. So short-sighted a being would err in his calculations; and one evil would be the result of another. To produce good, evil must be directed by the hand of an all-wise and all-powerful agent. Let man, therefore, act according to the dictates of his judgment and his conscience; and be assured that the event, whether foreseen, or unforeseen; apparently happy or unhappy; is not only for the general, but for his own particular advantage.

From a gay, unthinking girl, I take this wise epistle to witness that I

am become a sober and reflecting wife. Be assured that the friendship is as unchanged as the name of

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